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Evangelism *and* Christian Experience

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1930

TO

MY PARENTS

Whose Christian influence is
a continuous inspiration and
challenge to me.

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INTRODUCTION

THE present age is an age of specialization. In all the varied realms of thought, life and activity there is an effort to produce specialists and to delegate tasks to those specifically prepared for distinctive types of service. There was a time when the family physician administered his remedies for the cure of all ailments, but today specialists are sought out. There was a time when the whole process of bread-making was within the range of the activity of the family, but today that process has been broken up into various activities each of which calls for specialization. There was a time when the school-teacher taught all the subjects included in the curriculum of education, but today the process of education is a highly specialized activity There was a time when industry was a rather simple art. It was the time when the shoemaker made the whole shoe, the saddler the whole harness, the tailor the whole garment, the wagonmaker the whole wagon and the machinist the whole machine. But that day is far gone and today scores are engaged in these once simple but now highly specialized activities. This tendency toward specialization is finding expression in an increased disposition to call upon specialists to do the work, which was formerly done by the larger group.

This same urgency toward specialization and the calling out of specialists is also manifesting itself in the field of evangelism. In fact it has already come to dominate much of the thinking in this field and greatly hinders in the work of winning the world to Christ and making his mind and spirit regnant in all of man's related life. The terms evangelism, evangelist and revival are today highly specialized terms in the thought of many people. Just when the term evangelist carrying with it the idea of a specialist, was introduced into the Christian Church need not occupy the thought at length in this introductory word, yet it should be clearly noted that this is a marked deviation from the New Testament usage of the term. The word evangelist appears three times in the New Testament. It is found in Acts 21:8 where Philip is designated as evangelist; in Ephesians 4: 11 where Paul makes an enumeration of the gifts of the Spirit and in II Timothy 4:5 where Paul charges Timothy to do the work of an evangelist. In none of these references is there a full setting forth of the meaning of the term, but one thing is very evident and that is that in none of these is there anything like the highly specialized meaning which has been given to this term in modern times. There is no indication anywhere in the New Testament that the early church looked upon certain men as specialists to carry on the work of evangelism for the group. Every believer felt constrained to share in this activity through personal testimony and definite appeal. Evangelism was a normal activity in which all engaged both as Christian duty and privilege.

A brief survey of present-day church activity discloses the fact that this idea of specialization has found acceptance with many people. There are many congregations, which as soon as the work of evangelism is mentioned, turn instinctively to find some suitable evangelist to put on an evangelistic campaign. While many people think highly of their pastor and listen to him with pleasure and profit from Sunday to Sunday, yet somehow they feel he cannot successfully lead them in the work of evangelism. They think of evangelism as something super-added to the regular work of the Church which must be done by some one else. There are many workers, Trustees, Stewards, Leaders in Finance, Leaders of Youth, Teachers, Directors of the work of religious education and social and recreational activities, Leaders of men's work and Leaders of women's activities, who perform their work with exactness and careful devotion, giving much time and thought to the church, who yet somehow have never come to see the relationship of their activities to that of evangelism. These might be greatly surprised if someone were to call them evangelists, but such they are to be. What is their work if not evangelistic? All church activities should lead to evangelism. This faulty notion should be corrected and evangelism given a more vital place in all Christian activity.

In the thought of many church-members there is still a greater aloofness from the work of evangelism. Some at times criticise evangelists and church leaders, but seem to have no special sense of personal responsibility toward the work of evangelism. They have as yet not discovered any vital relationship between their own religious life and the work of winning others for Christ and the Church. There are some, of course, who co-operate in special efforts led by specialists, but in this they often manifest great hesitancy and lack of vital interest. In every church there are some who are seeking to give themselves to the work of evangelism but their number is usually not very large and their activity greatly limited. Too many have wholly delegated this to others.

Many pastors have also come under the influence of this false notion. They have lost confidence in their own spiritual leadership when it comes to evangelism, therefore they are ever in search of someone to do this work for them. They feel handicapped, limited in resource and methods and are fearful when they should be confident. How any pastor can habitually delegate this most enriching and satisfying service to others, seems difficult to understand. There is nothing more refreshing, more satisfying, more strengthening than to lead a congregation in the great work of evangelism. Pastors who surrender at this point rob themselves of one of the most rewarding spiritual ministries. There is great need today for a requickening of the passion of pastoral evangelism. There are times when a pastor needs help, when some one more specially gifted for this work may render a great service, but this should be the exception and not the rule. Many pastors would themselves be more gifted if they gave themselves to this work. There is nothing more exacting in the Christian ministry than this work of evangelism, but it is wonderfully rewarding. One must pay a great price for efficiency in this, but there will come a great reward.

Specialization has its value, but also its limitations. In industry and in science specialization has produced skill and efficiency It has brought large returns in terms of technical efficiency and material gains, but has everywhere tended to impoverish life. It has led to increased production but has tended to lower soul value. One of the most acute problems in modern industry is how to put soul value back into the work. How can people have real satisfaction in their work if they cannot relate their activities to the larger accomplishment? Higher wages alone will not suffice. There must be some way through which value, meaning, relationship and purpose can be put back into industry. An attempt is being made to meet this need in some places by a cooperative endeavor through which the worker can come into an enlarged sense of achievement. Instead of only producing a perfect part, he shares in the joy of the completed whole. This is a movement in the direction of reinvesting work with soul values.

In the church specialization has also produced some great leaders in evangelism. It has brought forth some successful methods but it has also tended to lessen the spiritual values in the regular church work. No worker in the Church can really find joy in his task unless he can properly relate it to the true purpose of the Church. Just to direct some activities, to teach a group of people, to help in meeting some obligations and to share in some benevolent enterprise, is not sufficient. There must be a sense of co-operation which will bring to every believer a feeling of fellowship in the redemptive activity of the church. Only when the individual task is so related that every one can see how his services link up with that of life-saving will there be joy and satisfaction. One reason why there are so many people in the church today who seemingly have lost the joy of salvation is because they have no conscious share in the work of evangelism. Merely to be a member of the church is not sufficient, one must be a member of a group which stands for a worth while achievement and so related to this accomplishment that he can see his own service contributing to the accomplishment of the work. Nothing else than a revival of evangelistic interest and co-operation will bring to the church a new sense of value and accomplishment.

The purpose of this book is to re-emphasize evangelism as a normal activity in the church. There will always be a place for those who are specially qualified and trained as leaders in this work. There will always be seasons of heightened interest and special appeal. But evangelism is more than an occasional effort. It is more than a movement led and directed by some great leader. It is the objective of all Christian activity, and the privilege of all believers. There has been a separation of evangelism from much of the regular Christian service. This must be remedied. Evangelism is not some specialty, not some superadded work, but the heart of all the work of the church. This fact needs re-emphasis and the following studies are devoted to bring to the church the thought of an evangelism which is normal, constant, and which surcharges all Christian activity.

The material in the book was prepared first for the class-room and it has been the effort to leave it in this form as far as possible. This of necessity involves some repetition and duplication, but this has been permitted to stand because it helps to see the truth from many more angles and it is hoped will add to the challenge of the discussion. The author is especially indebted to a number of classes with whom he was permitted to discuss the field of evangelism. Also to many ministers who have made valuable suggestions in Leadership Training Classes, in Ministers' Institutes, Pastors' Conferences and private discussions. He is also indebted to many who have written on this subject and from whose manifold discussions he has been permitted to gather many helpful suggestions. To all these he desires herewith to express his sincere appreciation and thanks.

With the hope that this book will be helpful in the effort to rediscover and re-emphasize evangelism as a normal activity in the church it is herewith sent forth on its mission.

The Author.

Kansas City, Mo.
Jan. 9, 1930.

CHAPTER I

THE MEANING OF EVANGELISM

THE USAGE AND MEANING OF WORDS

THE use of a word does not always imply a clear understanding of its meaning. It is often much easier to use a word than it is to define it. In the rhythm of thought words are often carried along without leaving any very definite idea in the mind of either the speaker or hearer. In fact, whenever a word comes into general usage it tends to lose some of the distinctiveness of its meaning. The more familiar a word becomes the greater the danger that its meaning becomes diffused in generalities. In the development of society words undergo great changes. Sometimes they take on added meaning; some words have a complete change of meaning, while some words become so fully depleted in meaning that they cease to represent any distinct idea. To be able to think clearly, and live vitally, it becomes necessary at times to re-examine the meaning of those words which are used to set forth the fundamental convictions of life. The study of most any familiar word will indicate how wide a margin there may be between the usage and the meaning of a word.

A group of home-makers were asked the simple question, "What is a home?" It would have been difficult to find a more familiar term than the word home, yet the answers given soon disclosed the fact that while the word was most familiar its meaning was indefinite and indistinct. Some defined a home as a special kind of building; others as a special building furnished for a particular kind of life; others as a place where two persons of opposite sex live together in that holy relationship of husband and wife; others said that into this relationship there must come children before there is a home; others defined a home as a relationship established and sanctified by Christ through his church, while yet others said that which makes a home is the spirit which characterizes such a relationship. These answers were not wrong, but clearly indicated that the word home lacked definiteness of meaning in the thought of these home-makers. While they frequently used the word home, they found it exceedingly difficult to give a clear and satisfying definition of its meaning.

A group of ministers were asked the question, "What is the Gospel?" Each man in this group believed himself set apart to preach the gospel, yet the answers to the question soon disclosed the fact that the word lacked definiteness of meaning. Some defined the gospel as the good news of salvation through Christ; others as the special message from God set forth in the Scriptures ;others as the revelation of God in Christ; others as the truth of God which is verified in experience; others as those doctrines which have been formulated by the church and set forth as the Christian standards and yet others as that disclosure of God's purpose which is to find fulfilment in the coming of the Kingdom of God. Again the interesting thing was not that these answers were wrong, for the gospel is all of that and more, but that this familiar term, even in the thought of those who used it most, lacked definiteness of meaning. There was evidently lacking clearness of conception. Such indefiniteness means that a word has lost much of its challenge and power.

DEFINITION OF EVANGELISM

The word evangelism is a very familiar term, especially in the Christian church. There is a sense in which this word is new even in the terminology of the church. The words revival and mission have been much more frequently used than the word evangelism, however, the word evangelism is distinctly a New Testament word and was very generally used by the early church. It is new today only in the sense that it has been somewhat neglected. In the past twenty-five years there has been a renewed interest in evangelism and the term has been greatly lifted in Christian thought. This emphasis upon evangelism calls for a restudy of the term. There is danger that the church use this great word without really understanding its meaning. But what does it mean? Many different answers are given. Some identify evangelism with the term revival; others with missions; others with personal work; others with religious education; others with social service and yet others with the public worship of the church. For most people the word seems to have such a general meaning that it ceases to stand for any clear and commanding idea. Surveying the literature of evangelism, several general conceptions are easily discovered.

One of the most common definitions of evangelism is that of teaching or preaching the gospel. It is thought of as the announcement to all men that Jesus Christ is come to seek and to save the lost and the bringing of the good tidings of salvation to the whole world. Dr. Wilbur Chapman emphasized this thought when he said that evangelism is "bringing the evangel or Gospel into contact with the unsaved, it is for contact, not conversion that the church is responsible."[1] Anyone who is familiar with the work of evangelism will not minimize the worth of such a contact. In fact contact is one of the most essential elements in the work of evangelism The apostle Paul recognized this fact when he wrote to the Christians at Rome that, "Belief cometh of hearing and hearing by the word of Christ."[2] To make known the truth in Christ is a vital activity for effective evangelism. The church has as yet not taken the matter of teaching and preaching the Gospel very seriously. There have been times when this greatly challenged the church, but there have been too many times when this great work was thrust into the background and there was little witnessing for Christ. Yet to define evangelism in terms of contact only is an incomplete conception. If announcement were all that is implied in evangelism then the Gospel might be sent forth through phonographs and sounding boards, but even though a phonograph were placed at every street-corner and a clear and distinct announcement made that would not assure effective evangelism. Something vital would still be lacking. Evangelism is more than announcement. It is more than an attempt to locate unsaved men and women. It is more than contact. That fact must be clearly faced if evangelism is to become a vital factor in the church.

Another conception of evangelism is that of teaching and preaching the Gospel with an effort to lead people to its acceptance. This conception adds an important element to that which has just been noted. Salvation is not through hearing only, but through belief and personal acceptance. Many in the past have heard and were not saved, there are many today who hear and yet are not being saved. Not until people respond to the truth will the truth become operative in terms of salvation. This conception emphasizes two things: First, those who present the Gospel should seek earnestly to elicit a response on the part of those who hear. It is a great art so to present the Gospel that it will move the heart and call forth a response of the will on the part of those who hear. Such a presentation implies more than mere embellishment. Sometimes more attention is given to the choice of phrases, the use of figures of speech, the selection of literary and other allusions than to the calling forth of a response. These embellishments have their worth. Everyone who presents the Gospel message should seek to clothe it in the best language possible, and give it such artistic finish that it will interest and challenge the hearer, but all this should ever be made subordinate to the appeal. Unless the Gospel is presented with an appeal, the presentation is a failure. It is the appeal which gives to all evangelistic efforts its distinctly personal quality. In much of modern teaching and preaching the appeal is too greatly submerged. Many seem to be afraid to press the truth to the point of personal decision and life response. This fact weakens evangelism in many places. Second, those who hear must personally respond to the truth. Only as a life opens to God and responds to his saving activity will there be a personal experience of God in the life. Those who hear have a responsibility as well as those who teach and preach. This fact is beautifully illustrated in the attitude of the people at Thessalonica when Paul presented the Gospel to them. They not only heard but received the word. Paul in reminding them of this said, "When ye received from us the word of message, even the word of God, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also worketh in you that believe."[3] The Gospel message is often made inoperative through the unwillingness of people to receive the truth of God and permit it to work in them. It is when the truth is received, believed and permitted to work in the life that the blessings of salvation come to man. Without such an experience the work of evangelism is incomplete.

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[1] Evangelistic Work, J. Wilbur Chapman.
[2] Rom. 10:17.

To define evangelism as the teaching and preaching of the Gospel with an effort to lead people to its acceptance, does not, however, furnish clearness and distinctness of meaning. While acceptance is quite generally stressed, there is great difference of opinion as to what such acceptance really implies. There is a tendency to have each interpreter of the Gospel define such acceptance in terms of his own particular conception of the Gospel. The result is that instead of unifying the believers this conception of evangelism often causes serious differences and sharply defined divisions. The cause of evangelism often suffers great harm because those who seek to win others for Christ and the church are not agreed as to what the acceptance of the Gospel implies. In many instances some one aspect of the acceptance is lifted into such great prominence that some people must act insincerely or be wholly excluded. Instead of seeking after the lost, some overzealous workers seek primarily after those who have responded to the Gospel but not in the particular way which they advocate nor joined their particular group. This zeal often disturbs individuals and congregations and tends to discourage and confuse many who are earnestly seeking to live the Christian life. If people were more earnestly seeking to elicit responses and less urgent that such responses must conform to a standard which they have set up, the work of the church would advance more rapidly. There can be no vital evangelism unless there is a clearer conception of its meaning and purpose. Whenever the conception of evangelism tends to divide Christian people, it weakens and destroys. A more adequate meaning must be found.

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[3] I Thess. 2:13.

Evangelism is also defined by some as the presentation of the Gospel for the purpose of eliciting a response together with an effort to provide an adequate opportunity for such a response. This conception of evangelism carries the definition over into the realm of methodology and brings evangelism into close relationship with missions and the revival meeting. In keeping with this conception there have been built up various agencies such as schools, homes, social-centers, and various other forms of Christian activity to make possible a larger opportunity for response. During the past half century great stress has been laid upon the building of organizations within the church. Through these, contacts are established, normal approaches furnished, and group sanctions created all of which offer added opportunities for a response to the Gospel message. The major emphasis, however, has been placed upon special efforts such as decision days and revival services. For many people the term evangelism means a revival meeting. They have as yet never learned to distinguish between the two. While the revival has been, and still is, one of the most fruitful methods of evangelism, the failure to distinguish between the revival meeting and evangelism is a serious confusion weakening rather than strengthening the work of evangelism. In the words of Kilpatrick, "To make evangelism a synonym of revivalism is untrue to the teaching of the New Testament."[4] Opportunities for response are essential in the work of evangelism. There must be times when the issue can be pressed in an atmosphere and environment which make such responses easy and meaningful. While the work of evangelism should be carried on continuously yet there are times when the ingathering should be larger than at other times. No one who is vitally interested in the work of evangelism will be indifferent toward the effort to build such opportunities for response. Failure to give attention to this aspect of the work often greatly hinders in evangelism. Many revival meetings and decision days failed because the leaders rushed into them without making adequate preparation. The building of opportunities for life responses should receive much more attention. Too many churches carry on without any definite aim or program. This is true of some churches which do not use the revival effort, but it is also true of many churches which use the revival. A revival means but little unless it is so vitally built into the program of the Church that it will furnish a real opportunity for response to the Gospel message. We are not only sowers, we must also be reapers.

This emphasis upon an opportunity for response greatly enriches the conception of evangelism, but the tendency to limit such opportunity to some one method of evangelism fails to give clearness and definiteness of meaning. The fact that in the minds of so many people evangelism and the revival meeting are so largely identified has been, and still is, one of the greatest difficulties in the promotion of evangelism. Such an identification of evangelism with one method limits its meaning and power. Evangelism is too great a work to be exhausted by any one method. When the largeness and challenge of evangelism are clearly seen there will be no quibbling about methods, for a work so all inclusive and so commanding needs many methods and agencies for adequate expression. Evangelism must be lifted out of the enslavement of method and released as a spiritualizing force which will flow through different methods. There is a new interest in religious education today and this method is giving great promise of a more vital evangelism, but already there are those who would enslave evangelism by this method, shutting out the use of all other methods and agencies. There are those who see no value in any other method and seek to limit the whole process of evangelism to the work of education. Others, of course, see no value in education and seek to enslave evangelism by some other method. The church must diligently guard against such misconceptions. Opportunities for response are needed, and these should be given careful consideration, but to identify evangelim with any one such opportunity is to limit evangelism in both meaning and power. A more vital conception is needed.

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[4] New Testament Evangelism, Kilpatrick, pg. 79.

EVANGELISM AN ATTITUDE, A SPIRIT

In more recent years evangelism is interpreted more largely as an attitude, a spirit rather than a method. This conception brings evangelism into a vital relationship with Christian experience and Christian living. It is a concomitant of Christian experience; an integral part of Christian living and the normal expression of a life of saving fellowship with God through Jesus Christ. Too often evangelism has been looked upon as something super-added, something introduced from without rather than something resident in the life of the individual and the group. Evangelism is more than a formal religious activity. It means more than the presentation of the truth which saves; more than an appeal; more than building opportunities for response, it means the spiritual outreach and impact of a life through which others are brought into such a relationship with God that there will be realized in their lives Christlikeness in character and life according to the ability of the individual. It also means such an impact of the spiritual upon the world-order that this order will be Christianized, which means brought under the control of the mind and the spirit of Jesus Christ. Evangelism is not merely one spiritual achievement in life, but a continuous enrichment of all of life. There are certain definite steps in the process, which are marked by definite personal experiences, but these experiences do not exhaust the process. Evangelism is a spirit which is constantly working with ever increasing urge and power. The vitality of this spirit is determined by the vitality of Christian experience. The more real and vital the Christian life the more real and vital will be the work of evangelism. This conception of evangelism has this advantage, that it unifies, enriches and challenges. It involves spiritual power and depth of meaning. It is Scriptural and was the conception of the early church during those years when the church made her greatest spiritual conquests. The church needs to rediscover this meaning and recommit herself to such a task. This is of far greater importance than the adoption of a new method. If this is done there will be released the spirit of evangelism.

Evangelism may, therefore, be defined as "an attitude which finds expression in an unceasing, co-operative effort on the part of man with God to bring men into vital personal relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ his Son, which is to result in a definite experience of personal salvation and a progressive building of Christlike character, bringing man into complete harmony with the will of God in all phases of life."[5] It is a spirit made operative through the truth of God experienced in the life; constant through the love of God dwelling in the heart; appealing through Christlikeness in character and life; searching through a loving solicitude for those who know not Christ, and effective through the leadership and empowering of the Holy Spirit. Whenever the church gives expression to such an attitude and is dominated by such a spirit, she is an evangelistic force in the world. Any evangelism which fails to release such a spirit is superficial and lacks spiritual meaning and power. It is not enough to hark back to the past; there must be building for the present. The spirit of evangelism must be much more inclusive and adventurous in these days than ever in the history of the church. In the words of Bishop McDowell, "Our fathers did not do it well enough before us. Maybe we are not big enough for our task any more than they were. But on the other hand, maybe we can secure a new life for our church, by a new discovery of, and a new response to, the sufficient adequate God."[6] This is what the leaders of the church are seeing with ever increasing clearness. There must be a new experience of God out of which will issue a new attitude, a new spirit and a new power for efficient Christian living. The demands of Christian living are greater and more urgent than ever before, and such living must issue from a new and enriched experience of God in the life. Evangelism is challenging the church with this urgency.

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[5] Class in Evangelism, Evangelical Theological Seminary, 1922.
[6] Federal Council Bulletin, Oct., 1927, pg. 5.

IMPLICATIONS OF THIS NEWER CONCEPTION

This larger conception of evangelism implies two very important facts which should be carefully noted. First, there must be a gradation in the evangelistic approach. While the objective of evangelism is the realization of Christlikeness in character and life according to the ability of the individual and applies to every age, the capacity of the individual to respond and give expression to such Christlikeness in character and life differs with the different age groups and also with the different individuals in the group. This makes it very necessary that there be a graded approach to life. It also calls for more implicit faith in the various responses. Christlikeness in the experience of a child may not have all the marks of Christlikeness in the life of the adult, but this does not mean that it is less real or meaningful. The difference lies in the capacity of the life. The same responses are not expected from children in other realms of life which are expected from adults. During the middle ages when all Europe was aflame with the purpose of rescuing the Holy Land from the enemies of the Cross, a Children's Crusade was organized to make the perilous journey to Palestine as soldiers of the cross. Whatever worth the ideal which prompted this crusade may have had, it was a movement so obviously contrary to every reasonable principle of life that it was doomed to failure and came to a sad and inglorious end. There are certain limits to the capacity of childhood and when these are ignored or neglected life suffers. It is not expected that Christlikeness in a child means that the child shall go as a foreign missionary, or give itself to the working out of economic and political solutions in keeping with the Christian principles, or attempt to fashion its experiences according to an adult standard in the social life, such things lie beyond the capacity of the child. God has planned a very long childhood and youth for the human race and wants children to live in the realm of the experiences of childhood and youth and not prematurely rush into the responsibilities of mature life. Parents sometimes try to shorten the period of childhood by forcing children prematurely into the larger activities of life. Sometimes children and young people become restless and want to assume the modes and responsibilities of adult life before they are really prepared for such living. This always means an impaired life and limited power. The life of childhood and youth must be carefully safeguarded if there is to be vital living. This applies to the Christian life also and has great significance for the work of evangelism.

If God has thus planned that children should enjoy the age of childhood and youth and live their lives in keeping with the capacity of life during these periods, he also wants children to live the Christian life in terms of childhood and youth, and adults should not rob children of their right by imposing adult standards which means robbing them of reality and meaning. The approach to life must be so graded that it will make possible a response which is real and meaningful. The capacity of life must ever be considered and carefully regarded. There must also be faith in the reactions of people. This is especially important in the work of evangelism among children. In this realm evangelism has in the past only too often been limited by the lack of confidence in the reactions of children. Instead of accepting their experiences as valid the attempt has often been made to translate these experiences into adult molds, but this has caused much confusion and greatly retarded the work of evangelism. Children are capable of having religious experiences which are meaningful and real, but these must not be forced into strange and unnatural molds. There is great need of more faith in the religious reactions of children.

The need of gradation in the evangelistic approach applies to adult life also. Just as Christlikeness in childhood has its own characteristics so Christlikeness in adult life has its own characteristics. While children are sometimes robbed of reality through adult concepts, adults are often robbed of challenge through childlike conceptions. Sometimes the church has been satisfied with reactions on the part of her adult membership which were really the reactions of childhood with the result that adult life lacked virile quality. There are too many adults who have never yet said with the apostle, Paul, "Now that I am become a man, I have put away childish things."[8] They still live in the immaturity of childhood. Their religious life lacks the qualities of mature life. This makes religion lacking both in interest and power. Many adults are only passively religious and have never yet come under the full challenge of the will and purpose of God. The result is the church is weak where she should be strong and many people are failing to find real joy and satisfaction in their religious life. The need of a more virile and aggressive religion among adults forces itself upon the church through the great challenges which are coming to her today. These urgencies cannot be adequately met unless there will be released more Christianity which finds expression in terms of the ideals and strength of adult life. The church must give more attention to the development of Christlikeness in character and life according to the ability of adult life. That means a more active, aggressive and courageous acceptance of the principles of Christian living.

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[8] I Cor. 13: 11.

Second, such a gradation also means that evangelism cannot be limited to one period of life or to one period of the year. It has already been pointed out that the work of evangelism is a constant activity. The question may be asked, "When is a person evangelized?" Surely not when the first step is taken into the Christian life. There are epochs, there are definite experiences which stand out in life with definite prominence and significance, but these only mark the progress and do not exhaust the process. As long as there is the possibility of growth in knowledge, in grace, and in service the work of evangelism must continue. Many people have thought the work of evangelism completed when a person was led into a definite personal experience of salvation, with the result that often the first step into the Christian life lost its significance and meaning and the life was not led on in the way of Christian living. The fact that evangelism is a continuous work must be more fully recognized and accepted. It begins with the child in the cradle but continues until the soul is cradled in its eternal rest in God.

This fact is receiving much more emphasis today than formerly. Through the development of religious education, a definite program is being outlined for the building of Christian character in its progressive development. This should mean a more vital religious life. This emphasis is also giving evangelism a more vital place in the thought of the whole church. In the light of these facts it is clearly seen that evangelism is not something super-added, or incidental, but rather the heart of all Christian activity. This is a work which should engage the time, thought and energy of not only a few believers but of all who love the Lord Jesus. If people would only clearly see that evangelism is the work through which Christlikeness in character and life is being realized there would be a more hearty response to this work. Such building of character is the noblest work in which man can engage. But it is the work of not one period but of a whole life-time. He who would be efficient in helping others to come into the realization of the highest life through Jesus Christ must make this his first interest in life. He who would be truly Christlike in character and life must give all diligence to make his "calling and election sure." This is the glory of the Christian religion, this is the challenge of our calling. Evangelism is the heart of all Christian activity.

THE LIFE OF SAVING-FELLOWSHIP

The deeper meaning of evangelism can only be understood if an analysis of Christian experience is made. Two elements characterize such an experience. First, Christian experience implies a life of saving-fellowship with God through Jesus Christ. Such a life is characterized by the removal of the estrangement from God which sin produces and an at-home feeling with God. It is a life of the restored soul, the renewed spirit, and the adjustment of the whole being to the will and purpose of God. The basis of this life is the consciousness of the forgiveness of sin. There is no real and satisfying fellowship with God unless there is an inner sense of forgiveness. Dr. H. R. Mackintosh has set this forth in these challenging words, "No man can properly rank as a Christian in the sense of the New Testament, who has not received the forgiveness of sins, or who is not conscious that through its impartation something has happened of decisive moment for his relation to God."[9] But it is not enough to be forgiven, the new relationship established must become ever more and more meaningful through the practice of the presence of God. The sense of the Divine presence in the life is the privilege of every believer and a source of ever increasing strength. For many Christians there seems, however, great indefiniteness and uncertainty with reference to this fact. Many have not yet come to that experience in which they have an at-home feeling with God. They serve God, they hope to win his favor, but fail to enjoy a vital, satisfying fellowship with him. They have not yet come to understand the full meaning of the words of Jesus when he says, "No longer do I call you servants . . . . but I have called you friends."[10]

Such a life of fellowship also implies a relationship of mutual self-giving. The Christian life is a life of right personal relationship of man with God. But the maintenance of such a relationship depends upon the observance of the law of mutual self-giving. Without such an attitude there can be no real and satisfying fellowship. God has pledged himself to the observance of this law. He is constantly seeking to give himself. He will withhold no good thing. He will never fail in his part to maintain the life of fellowship. The apostle Paul found the greatest assurance and challenge in his own Christian life in this fact of the faithfulness of God. Speaking of this willingness of God to share with man, he said, "He that spared not his own Son but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him, freely give us all things."[11] The hesitancy in the observance of this law is not on God's side, but only too often on man's side. It is man who hesitates, fears and withholds. Such hesitancy is sometimes due to lack of understanding, but sometimes it is also due to lack of moral earnestness. Some people have not yet learned to come to God in such a way that they are led to trust him. They serve him but fear to enter into full intimacy lest God might ask of them that which they would rather not do. But unless man is willing to enter such a relationship of mutual self-giving he cannot enjoy the intimacy of fellowship. Here the work of evangelism must be stressed in terms of the disclosure of Jesus. The God whom Jesus revealed is trustworthy. If God is like Jesus, why should anyone fear to commit life to him? No one has ever made the great committal and found himself deceived or disappointed. The happiest people are those who have learned to trust God implicitly and yield themselves to him. Such a self-giving brings joy and peace to the soul. It is not enough that people are led to Jesus Christ as Saviour, they must also be led to yield themselves to God so completely that they will come into the joy of a life of saving-fellowship with God through Jesus Christ.

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[9] The Christian Experience of Forgiveness. H. R. Mackintosh, pg. 2.
[10] John 15: 15.

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[11] Romans 8: 32.

Such a life of fellowship implies also an ever enlarging experience of salvation. Christian fellowship is saving-fellowship. The apostle Paul pointed out this fact when he said that being reconciled through the death of Christ "shall we be saved by his life."[12] The apostle John presents the same truth when he says, "If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son, cleanseth us from all sin."[13] It should be carefully noted that salvation is a very inclusive term and represents a process as well as an act. The experience of salvation is through Jesus Christ, but his saving activity is manifold. The apostle Paul presents this truth from another angle when writing to the Corinthians he said, that Christ is made unto us, "Wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption."[14] This larger view of salvation is needed to appreciate the gift of God in Christ as well as to appreciate the power of Christian fellowship. Many people seek to limit the work of salvation to some one experience, glorious and satisfying as that experience is, yet it is only one aspect of the work of salvation through Christ. Through a life of fellowship the saving process gradually enlarges and the experiences multiply. Such a life of fellowship means the enlightening of the understanding, the enlarging of the sympathies, the deepening of the love, and the spiritual empowering of the life. It means a constantly enlarging Christlikeness in character and life. It is an indictment of the evangelism of both the past and the present that not more people have been led into such an at-home feeling with God and into a life of saving fellowship. The supreme task is not to lead people to a confession, nor into an experience, nor into membership in the church, but into a life of conscious fellowship with God through Jesus Christ. Unless that is accomplished the work of evangelism is superficial and lacks meaning and power. Such a life of fellowship is what God desires and it should also be the supreme desire of every Christian.

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[12] Romans 5: 10.
[13] I John 1: 7.
[14] I Cor. 1: 30.

Second, evangelism also implies a life of fellowship in service. Religion is not something merely to be enjoyed. True religion brings joy, and peace and happiness, but good-feeling is not all of religion. In fact, sometimes a genuine experience of salvation does not bring good feeling, but rather a feeling of deep conviction and heaviness of heart, urging the life on to exacting and sacrificial self-giving. There seem to be many who have as yet never lifted their religion out of the realm of good feeling into that of convictions and responsibilities. They want every thing about religion so organized that they will experience a thrill of emotional satisfaction in terms of good-feeling. Any plan or program which would disturb such feeling they vigorously oppose. They want a religion of joy. They want the sermon, the service, and the whole program to be joy-producing. Of course for them joy lies wholly in the realm of emotion. They have not yet learned to find joy in self-giving and sacrifice, in service and self-denial, and in intercession for others. This striving after superficially produced joy in religion greatly weakens evangelism. People must learn to distinguish between joy as an objective sought after and joy as a result of noble thinking and true living. Few people find joy if they go out in search after it. The truly happy people are those who have found a worth while purpose of life, and are giving themselves in faithful pursuit of that purpose, finding their joy in service. It is one of the sad facts that much of religion is selfish instead of altruistic when it comes to the matter of joy in religion. Therefore many are restless and dissatisfied. They are seeking joy as an objective and finding it not, they are unhappy. What people need is the commitment of life to a worth-while purpose and then they will come into the experience of a joy which satisfies.

One of the sad facts which is only too much in evidence is that many have as yet never entered into a fellowship of service with God. They are good people, living well regulated lives and interested in the progress of the Kingdom, but they are on-lookers instead of workers. Some seem to think of Christian service as something so difficult, so sacred and so far beyond them that they cannot share in it; others seem to think that one must be specially called to share in the service of the church, and not having become conscious of such a call they feel themselves excluded; while others do not wish to be tied down with definite responsibilities and therefore refuse to enter a life of service. Too many still look upon the church as an agency through which they receive certain good, for which they are willing to pay at least a nominal sum, but apart from this they do not wish to be burdened with responsibility. Whatever the reason, the fact remains that many professed Christians are not living a life of fellowship in service. This greatly weakens the church and lessens her outreach in evangelism and world-service. It also weakens Christian experience, for people who only receive do not find real happiness. Fellowship in service is an essential element in efficient Christian living. Partnership in service is as necessary as communion of soul. The two belong together.

FOURFOLD ACTIVITY IN SERVICE

Such fellowship in service implies a fourfold activity. First, it implies a life of partnership with God in the building of the church, the spread of the truth in Christ, and the winning of all men to its acceptance. As just pointed out, the experience of salvation through Jesus Christ brings not only personal release and enrichment, but carries with it also personal responsibility. To know that Jesus saves carries with it a responsibility to make that fact known to others. This responsibility rests upon all believers. Too often this fact is not recognized and accepted, but evangelism cannot become a real force in the world until all believers assume their share of the responsibility. In the early church all believers were witnesses for Christ and as long as the church continued witnessing she was a spiritual power in the world. What Christ asked of the early church he asks of all his followers. His parting word was, "Ye shall be my witnesses,"[15] and his parting command, "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations."[16] Failure to share with God in this work of evangelism is failure to obey Christ. Such failure impoverishes experience and weakens the church.

Second, this fellowship in service also implies partnership with God in the release and development of the human personality. Evangelism is basically lifesaving. It is that activity through which the human personality is brought into such a relationship with God that there will be a release from the power which blights and curses and the whole life brought into the experience of personal salvation. But the work of salvation means more than salvaging a life. It means stimulating, environing, enriching, and directing a life so that the powers of personality may be released and developed. The greatest reality in the universe is personality. The fullest expression of that reality is in the supreme Personality whom we call God. In the life of Jesus Christ man has seen something of the glory of that supreme personality in terms of redemption. But man is also a personality, and the glory of the human personality lies in his capacity to become God-like in character and life. This work of so relating man is the supreme effort of evangelism. This is the service into which God invites man. In this work lies the greatest good for the world. The more the human personality approximates the Divine personality, the more will the world become enriched and secured and the more will the spirit of brotherhood and good will prevail among men. The apostle Paul pointed out this fact when he said that all creation is yearningly waiting for the "revealing of the sons of God."[17] Such a realization will bring to light the true meaning and purpose of creation. This is the task to which the followers of Christ are called.

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[15] Acts 1: 8.
[16] Matt. 28: 19-20.

Third, this fellowship in service also implies a partnership with God in the defeat and removal of the forces of evil in the world. There are many forces operative which bring suffering and death. There are many relationships which are built upon injustice and unrighteousness and which make impossible the achievement of the greater good in the life of the individual and the group. There are many things which cause loneliness, heartache, disappointment and failure. These are to be removed. God is seeking to banish them from human society, but he needs the help of man. Only he whose heart has been cleansed from evil and sin can wholeheartedly co-operate with God in this great work, therefore the major responsibility falls upon those who have come into the experience of salvation themselves. Sometimes people hesitate to take a definite stand against these evils because they are intimidated through their power; sometimes their destruction implies certain losses in terms of temporal gain which people are not willing to suffer; sometimes wrong conceptions about the saving power of the Gospel make people indifferent to this great responsibility and sometimes lack of moral earnestness causes people to hesitate and waver in their attack upon these evils. But fellowship in service implies a definite, aggressive opposition to all evil and sin. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. He calls his followers to the same task. There are no powers of evil which can outmatch the powers of God therefore the followers of Christ should be courageous and seek earnestly to banish those forces which seek to destroy the purposes of God in the world. Sin cannot conquer, righteousness must rule. It is the privilege of the followers of Christ to assist in the destruction of the forces of evil and sin.

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[17] Romans 8:19.

Fourth, this fellowship in service also implies a partnership with God in the building of the kingdom of God upon earth. God is not only seeking to banish the evil, but he is also seeking to establish the good. The kingdom of God is the rule of God. Its establishment means the bringing of all of life under the Lordship of Jesus and into harmony with the will of God. There is much of life which is still not subject to the Divine will. There are many relationships in which selfishness and injustice are the dominant factors, but some day all shall be brought under the sway of the authority of Christ. Then righteousness will fill the earth; then peace will abide in the world; then truth will prevail and then good-will and brotherhood will characterize all relationships. This is the hope of the Christian. This is the task to which God calls man. The apostle Paul has given the great ideal in words of partnership when he says, "We are God's fellow-workers,"[18] in the building of the Kingdom of God.

It is true that worship holds a vital place in personal religion; that communion of soul is basic; that there is a mystical element in the relationship which implies a deep sense of oneness with God; that quietness, meditation and thought are essentials for the building of a satisfying relationship with God; and that one must take time to practice the presence of God, but it is also true that the Christian life must find expression through Christian service. It is just as important to work with God as it is to wait upon God. Unless the experience of God in a life can be made to flow out in service for others it becomes a selfish enjoyment and loses its power and meaning. No man can be a Christian and live for himself. In much of evangelism this fact is not adequately set forth with the result that many people are today living inactive and impotent Christian lives. The sad thing about this is that many people seemingly feel that they are meeting their full obligation without giving themselves to definite service. There is great need that the full implication of Christian living be more clearly set forth in Christian teaching.

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[18] I Cor. 3: 9.

RENEWED INTEREST IN EVANGELISM

This larger conception of evangelism is today stirring the church to new interest and activity. Evangelism has always had a place in the thought and activity of the followers of Jesus Christ. The church has always in ideal at least confessed and set forth evangelism as her major task. There were times when this ideal greatly challenged the church, but there were also times when she was not greatly stirred by the call to evangelism. A great awakening has come to the church during the past ten years. This has largely been forced upon her through the urgencies growing out of the war and post-war conditions. Perhaps never before has the word evangelism been as much before the church as at the present time. The history of the church during the past twenty-five years reveals clearly that there has been a steady increase in evangelistic interest and emphasis until today the church is facing an evangelistic challenge unprecedented in scope and content.

Although this awakening has come, there is still much hesitancy, misunderstanding, prejudice and indifference which must be overcome if this movement is to bring forth those spiritual results which are so greatly needed in both the church and the social order. There are still many who fail to see the greatness of this work. Many people still think of evangelism merely as an occasional effort to win people for Christ and the church. There are still those who value all evangelistic efforts in terms of the gains made for their own group. The man who said as he witnessed the reception of a group of children and young people into the church, "I would not give five cents for all of them," still has his followers. This man saw nothing except the amount which new members would contribute to the immediate needs of the church. Judged from that point of view he could not see a profit of even five cents. People need to be instructed in the deeper meaning and challenge of evangelism. The thought of people must be enlarged, their interest deepened, and the whole church led into a more definite and aggressive participation in this effort. Evangelism must become the passion and the purpose of all believers and must imply not merely the winning of others, but the building of the Christian church and a Christian social order. It must definitely aim at the bringing of all of life under the control of the moral and the spiritual.

Several things are especially stressed in the effort to set forth the larger meaning of evangelism. First, it is becoming more and more evident that evangelism is not some phase of church work, but the heart of all religious activity. It is that for which the church exists and without which there is no justification for existence. Unless the church evangelizes, Christianizes, she denies the purpose of her creation. When this fact is clearly seen there will be less hesitation and more whole hearted co-operation. When people come to see the vital place evangelism occupies they will be more ready to take up the work. When people really understand that all Christian activity has a direct relationship to evangelism they will have their interest itensified and discover a new worth in their Christian activities. Many have as yet never related their own service to the work of evangelism, therefore they still think of evangelism as some aspect of Christian service rather than the heart of such service. This conception needs to be corrected.

Second, it is also becoming more and more evident that evangelism is not something which only a few pious souls can do, but that which all believers can and should do. There will always be some who can do this better than others. There will always be room for the specialists. But this does not mean that only those who can do it best should engage in this work. God wants every one to share in this work. Perhaps some could do it better if they gave more attention to this work. In this the early church furnishes a true ideal. While the apostles took the leading part, all the believers participated in the work. When they were scattered about they continued to witness for Christ even though the apostles were not present. The writer of the book of Acts makes this interesting record, "They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching (literally, evangelizing) the word."[19] One of the greatest weaknesses in all methods of evangelism is that these usually enlist only a few people in the effort of evangelism. This must be corrected. Some method must be found which will enlist a larger number in this work. Every Christian can have some part in evangelism and should definitely assume his share of the responsibility.

Third, it is also becoming increasingly clear that evangelism is a work which cannot be accomplished in two or three weeks of the year and then neglected the rest of the year. There are special times when special efforts should be made, but these are only the heightening of the emphasis which should be made continuously. There are several reasons why such a limited time is insufficient. Merely to give attention to this work at so limited a time means an impoverished Christian life. There is no form of Christian activity which has greater enrichment for the worker than has evangelism. The believers need the spiritual help which evangelism furnishes. Then, too, people need to be saved not only during the time of the special effort but at all times. The limiting of evangelism to special seasons has tended to indict the interest in the unsaved. If people are interested in the salvation of others during a revival or special season only, their interest is open to serious question. Genuine interest cannot thus be limited. People who may not be brought to a response during a special effort need the solicitude and prayer of those who are Christians after the efforts as well as during such an endeavor. God has nowhere limited conversion to one period. The true ideal is an evangelism which is continuous. Unless evangelism is the work of the church at all times, there will be times when the church is untrue to her supreme task. The thought that evangelism is a work which can be done at a particular time and then neglected until another such special effort is one which is basically wrong and needs to be changed. The church should be at this great task all the time.

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[19] Acts 8: 4.

Fourth, it is also becoming increasingly clear that evangelism is more than leading people to Christ. It implies also the building up of people in Christ and sending them forth for Christ. The development of Christian character is as important as the bringing of a life to decision. In fact, often the latter is made less permanent because the former is neglected. There are many people living apart from Christ today who once were led to a decision, but were not led on in the way of Christian living, therefore were lost for Christ and the church. More careful attention must be given to the development of the Christian life.

Fifth, it is becoming more and more evident that evangelism and a method of evangelism are not identical. There is only one evangelism, but there are different methods. No one method fully expresses the content of evangelism. The method, while important, is nevertheless secondary, the realization of Christlikeness is the essential thing. Instead of becoming enslaved by one method, Christian workers should learn how to use different methods. The efficiency of a person is determined by the ability to do more than one thing at the point of tension. If a person can do only one thing he is a very limited person. Just so in evangelism, the more methods one can use the more efficient he will be in the winning of others for Christ and the church. Too many people have never learned the art of using different methods. Some are so enslaved to one method that they refuse to use any other. Others are lacking in knowledge and therefore unable to render a greater service. A change in method is no discarding of the truth, but a new approach with the same objective in mind. Evangelism must be clearly lifted above the method.

Sixth, it is also becoming increasingly clear that evangelism is a creative activity which implies the creation of a new creature in Christ Jesus. Paul was right when he said that "there is a new creation whenever a man comes to be in Christ."[20] This is true of the individual, but it is also true of the group. There is also a new creation whenever any group comes to be in Christ. Evangelism means more than a new arrangement of life, it implies a creative activity.

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[20] II Cor. 5: 17 (Moffatt's Translation).

Often people are tempted to reduce evangelism to the level of a change instead of a creation. People may effect a new arrangement of life with little moral and spiritual gain, but when there is a new creation there will follow a new life. It should ever be kept in mind that evangelism is more than a new arrangement. Here is where the work of the Holy Spirit in evangelism needs to be stressed. It is the function of the Spirit to work such a new creation. Unless he is operative in the work of evangelism, there will be nothing but an arrangement. Whenever he is given right-of-way there is a new creation, old things are changed and all things are made new. Evangelism is therefore more than improvement, advancement, correction, it is creative of a new life and a new order. In the life of the individual this has long since been recognized, but in the social order it has not been as fully recognized as it should be. Too often evangelism has been held apart from all social applications, but this is impossible. As soon as a man is saved he must express his life in some kind of social activity. If he lives true to his new purpose he will live a different life in the social order. His life will be a Christianizing influence in the social order. But this truth must be more stressed. Just as the Gospel is the power of God to save the individual so it is the power of God to save people in their related life and activity. Evangelism implies a social regeneration through the creative power of the Holy Spirit. This gives to evangelism such great significance and power.

It is clear, therefore, that the meaning of evangelism can only be found in the realm of the spirit. Evangelism is an attitude, a spirit. It is a co-operative activity on the part of man with God. It is the effort to bring all of life under the Lord-ship of Jesus Christ.

The objective of evangelism is the realization of Christlikeness in character and life. This Christlikeness implies a life of fellowship with God which finds expression in a comradeship of service. It is a creative activity through which there is brought about a new creation. All this gives to evangelism a particular significance and brings to the church a great challenge. Evangelism is more than a method, it is the work of bringing all of life under the dominance of the moral and spiritual. Its deepest significance lies in Christian experience and a Christian social order.

CHAPTER II

THE SPIRIT OF EVANGELISM

SPIRIT THE ESSENTIAL FACTOR

THE essential element in evangelism is not program, nor method, but spirit. A program is an aid in defining the task and creating interest; a method provides a mode of procedure, but it is spirit which makes evangelism a vital force. This distinction should be carefully made by all those who are seeking to make evangelism more effective. There is always a tendency for people to expend most of the time, thought and energy on methods and programs and neglect the spirit. Methods and programs have their place and significance and should not be neglected, but they must always be made subordinate to the spirit. In some evangelistic efforts there is such a sad neglect of the spirit and so little spirit created that when the immediate stimuli are removed the whole effort of evangelism ceases and very little of permanent result remains. Illustration of this is found in the observance of some decision days and decision periods in the Sunday School, also in some revival meetings, where methods and programs are so greatly stressed that they submerge the spirit, and what is heralded as a spiritual achievement is merely a superficial reaction and therefore lacks permanency in results. With the apostle Paul the church should "desire earnestly the greater gifts" in terms of best methods, but ever make the spirit of first concern. Careful thought should be given to evangelistic programs. This aspect of evangelism deserves more careful and thoughtful study than is often given to it. In a later chapter a special study of this phase of the work will be made. In this chapter the interest is primarily in that which is most vital in evangelism. That which is constant rather than those elements which vary. In evangelism as in all other activities of life it is true that "the letter killeth but the spirit giveth life."[1] Unless there is a spirit of evangelism all other things avail little. It is the spirit which gives vitality and makes evangelism a real force in the world. The primary interest should therefore ever be in the creation and release of the spirit of evangelism.

In all the fine arts it is the spirit which gives quality and completeness. In music it is the spirit of music which gives to the technique quality and artistic perfection. One may be skilled in musical notation, trained in melody and harmony, and efficient in the combination of tones, but unless he has the spirit of music he is not truly a musician. Without the spirit, however correct the technique, there is artificiality and lack of soul quality. In listening to the rendition of some musical selection one can usually soon discover whether it is an interpretation of the letter or of the spirit. In the art of painting there is more than lines, perspective and color scheme. These alone do not make a great picture. All the great works of art are pre-eminently expressions of the spirit. It is the spirit in the painting which makes the picture a masterpiece. In the arts of interpretation the spirit also holds the place of pre-eminence. History is rather a barren record and uninteresting narrative unless one discovers the spirit of history. Literature fails to rise to beauty and power when stripped of the spirit. Philosophy seems but speculative inquiry until one catches the spirit of philosophical research and study. Theology is little more than technical definitions until one discovers the spirit of religion and feels the thrill of life as it seeks expression through acts of faith. In the arts of expression, achievement and service it is the spirit also rather than the technique which furnishes quality and perfection. It is the spirit of the athletic team which gives greatest interest and strength to the contest; it is the spirit of the adventurer which lifts his contributions to the achievements of mankind into true glory and abiding worth; it is the spirit of the one who serves which lifts service out of drudgery and makes it a blessing to others; it is the spirit of the giver which lifts his gift out of the ordinary benevolence and makes it a source of joy and helpfulness, it is also the spirit of evangelism which lifts this fine service out of the sphere of routine and formalism and gives it spiritual quality and abiding worth. Without the spirit all life expressions are formal and lacking in soul quality and artistic perfection. When there is released spirit the essential quality of life is supplied. God is spirit and his worshipers must worship him in spirit and truth.

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[1] 2 Cor. 3:6.

SEARCHING FOR THE SPIRIT

The question, however, arises, "What is spirit?" What is the spirit of evangelism? Is this merely a name or does it represent a reality. Spirit seems to be something elusive, intangible, indefinite, undefinable and lacking in concrete reality. It may well be asked, is that which seems to be so difficult to comprehend, so essential in life? It is true that spirit cannot be represented in picture as one represents material things; that one cannot find spirit with the microscope as he discovers the crystal and the cell; that one cannot handle spirit as he handles material things: that spirit belongs to another form of reality of which man is as yet very much in ignorance, but it is not, therefore, true that spirit is unreal. Not all reality can be discovered through the technique which has been developed through scientific study and research. This does not mean, however, that, therefore, an awareness of such reality lies outside of consciousness, or even if it be granted to be in consciousness that it cannot be established as truth in such a way as to warrant belief. Dr. Wieman is probably correct when he says in answer to the question, "Does God affect our senses?" "We scarcely see how any one can deny it. The weight of the sun affects our senses, and so does the atom, and so do the chemical components of the remote stars, otherwise we could never know these objects. Surely any object that sustains human life must affect our senses. Since God is that something that sustains human life, he sustains the senses, and hence affects the senses. For who will deny that the senses are a part of human life? But anything that affects the senses is an object that may be perceived through the senses."[2] If one agrees with Dr. Wieman that God can be perceived, whatever his thought concerning the technique through which such perception is possible, then he must also agree that spirit can be perceived, for God is spirit. Whatever light science may be able to throw upon the process of knowing man is not necessarily limited to this for God is known intuitively through the power of spiritual apperception. But if spirit can be known then spirit is no longer evasive and unreal. It is not merely an imaginary theory that spirit can be known but a fact grounded in reality. The question is therefore not primarily one of the reality of spirit but of technique through which such a discovery is possible. When the proper technique is found the discovery is made. The chief difficulty is the fact that too little attention is given to the building of such a technique. There has been much attention given to the development of a technique through which to make discovery in the realm of the physical, but only little to the development of a technique for the discovery of the things of the spirit. Man often lives altogether too much in the realm of the material and physical and is not giving attention enough to the spiritual. He is not exercising the power of spiritual apperception. He needs to become more efficient in the realm of the spirit.

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[2] The Wrestle of Religion With Truth, H. N. Wieman, pg. 94.

The approach to this question can, however, best be made from the viewpoint of the practical rather than the philosophical. Such an approach will greatly simplify the problem. Let us look at the question of the spirit of an athletic team. Is such a spirit a reality? When people speak about the spirit of an athletic team are they merely using words or describing a reality? In an athletic contest people are often heard to speak about some individual athlete, or about the general training of each athlete, or about certain distinct plays, then suddenly add, that what impresses them most is the spirit of the team. This spirit is the greatest asset in a team. Is not this spirit real? It may not be possible to photograph it as the individual can be photographed. It cannot be touched and handled as can the individual, but it can be discovered and somehow its reality forces itself upon one. No one who has ever witnessed such a contest can deny the reality of something in the game which is called spirit. Or let us think of the home. How often after leaving some home the experience of the visit is reenacted in memory. The picture of the house is recalled; the furnishings are vividly brought to mind; incidents connected with the visit are reviewed; and many of the words spoken are brought back with added interest and meaning. Suddenly, however, another reality is sensed. There was something more in that home. The love and Christian consideration which characterized all relationships, were expressions of a spirit resident there. It was this spirit which made this home so attractive and the visit so satisfying. This spirit could not be seen, it could not be handled, but its presence was, however, sensed, and it was as real as anything in the home. Who could deny the reality of such a presence in a home? What a sad picture a home presents in which the spirit is lacking. Who has not sensed the presence of the spirit in a church where Jesus Christ is the life of the membership; where his purpose and his passion are the purpose and passion of the believers; where there is a kindly interest in, and consideration for, others and where there is an earnest effort to live the Christ-life and establish the kingdom of God on earth. There is something more in such a church than the furnishings and equipments, and it is that something more which makes the church what it is. That something which makes the church so attractive and winsome is the spirit in the church. No wonder people seek out that church, for such a spirit appeals and blesses. Is it real? If this is not real, then there is no reality.

SPIRIT RESIDENT IN A COMPLEX

These illustrations point the way to the answer to the question, Is spirit real? It may not be possible adequately to define spirit, but it is possible to discover it. Its presence can be sensed and experienced as a plus element which exists in a complex. When a certain relationship has been established, there will be a spirit. Two things are very evident. First, the reality of the spirit always depends upon the complex. Not every athletic team discloses a spirit. Not every home reveals a spirit. Not every church manifests a spirit. Athletic teams may be nothing more than an aggregation of individual players, each one playing for himself and unwilling to merge himself with the group. A home may be little more than a boarding-house, and a lodging place, with little of mutual interest and mutual self-giving. A church may be but the assembly place where people gather for certain religious exercises without entering into any definite relationships of fellowship and service. The character of the complex is an essential for the release of the spirit. Second, the presence of the spirit lifts and gives significance to every relationship. It is the spirit which gives to the technique soul quality. It is the spirit which takes away artificiality and furnishes spiritual content and power. It is the spirit which unifies and blesses. When we speak of the spirit of evangelism we mean that which gives to all Christian life and activity its deepest spiritual significance and power and makes Christianity a winning power.

In evangelism also it may be impossible fully to define the spirit, but it can also be discovered. One may surely sense the presence of the spirit. It is, therefore, necessary to give special attention to the building of a complex in which this spirit is resident. The first concern should be the release of the spirit of evangelism. If there is failure in this, all else will profit little. There will be the spirit of evangelism if there is the right kind of a complex.

THE SPIRIT A CONSTANT

This spirit of evangelism is a constant reality. There are times when this spirit is more in evidence than at other times. There are seasons of heightened spiritual interest; there are times and occasions of intensified evangelistic emphasis and appeal, but the spirit of evangelism as a basic reality is constant. This truth is not as clearly understood as it should be by many Christians. There are some who believe the spirit of evangelism to be present only at times. It is true that sometimes it seems difficult to discover the presence of this spirit in the church. There are churches where little of the spirit is in evidence. This may be due to several reasons. First, it may be due to a lack of understanding and knowledge of the truth. There are congregations in which the people are led to believe that if they manifest the spirit of evangelism at certain times, that is all that is expected of them. In this the spirit of evangelism is somewhat like unto the spirit of patriotism. In times of war the people are stirred up to give expression to the spirit of patriotism in defense of their nation. They often become very patriotic in thought and conduct. Sometimes such patriotism implies great heroism and a large sacrifice for the nation. But when the war is over the spirit of patriotism is apt to recede and people give little thought to the nation. The reason for this is that in times of peace people seem to think patriotism is not needed. They are not less patriotic than they are during war times, the spirit of patriotism is present, but there is little opportunity for expression. The wrong idea of patriotism chains the spirit of patriotism. This greatly weakens the building of the nation. When once people will feel as much urgency to express the spirit of patriotism for peace as they do for war, the work of building a nation strong in righteousness and truth will be greatly enhanced. It is not that the spirit of patriotism is not present, but it is not given expression. Just so with the spirit of evangelism. A wrong idea about evangelism makes inoperative the spirit of evangelism. People need to be led to see more clearly the real meaning and challenge of evangelism. The spirit of evangelism is a constant but there must be opportunity for this spirit to find expression in definite evangelistic efforts. It is not enough to express the spirit of evangelism during a revival or special effort, this spirit should find continuous expression.

Second, there is another reason why the spirit of evangelism sometimes seems to be so little in evidence, that is because there is often lacking moral earnestness and moral aggressiveness. When the moral sense weakens, the conscience is seared, and moral endeavor is neglected, there will be little urge and little opportunity for the manifestation of the spirit of evangelism. There is always danger that people become morally indifferent. This danger is greatly increased in times of prosperity and peace. When people are giving themselves to the pursuit of wealth, and pleasure, and self-indulgences of all kinds, they have little interest in the things of the spirit. During such times, the work of the church becomes difficult, the operation of the Holy Spirit greatly obstructed, and few are won for Christ. There is need of a new moral emphasis in our day. Many are trifling with sin; many have little concern for righteousness; many even try to prove that society has outlived sin, and that there is no binding moral standard. A new moral assertion in thought and life is much needed. There must be awakened a new moral sense which will impel people to a new moral endeavor. People need again to be brought face to face with the fact of the reality and destructiveness of sin, and to be reminded of the consequences of sin both in this present life and in the life to come. The truth of the destructiveness of sin must be reaffirmed. The spirit of evangelism is too often subdued by the moral indifference of the times. If there is to come a great spiritual awakening there must be a requickening of the moral sense. This requickening must be experienced in the lives of those who profess to be followers of Christ, but it must also become a conscious reality in the lives of those not saved. Whenever there is a keen moral sense there is a manifestation of the spirit of evangelism.

Third, there is still a more vital reason. The manifestation of the spirit of evangelism is very largely determined by the spiritual experience of the believers. While the spirit of evangelism is constant, the vitality of this spirit depends upon the vitality of the Christian life. It has been already pointed out that the spirit in the various arts is the resultant of a complex. There is no spirit of music apart from the elements which make up musical knowledge. The knowledge of musical symbols, the appreciation of harmony, the symphonic blending of tones, and the training in technique are basic elements in the complex which produces the spirit of music. If any of these are wanting there will be no spirit of music. There can be no spirit released in the art of painting unless there be true lines, a clear perspective and artful color schemes. In all art the spirit also resides in the complex and if this is impaired, the spirit is destroyed. Just so there is no true spirit of evangelism apart from a spiritual complex in terms of a personal experience of salvation. When such a complex has been established, the spirit is present. If this complex is a reality, the spirit is a reality. As long as the complex exists, the spirit exists; it is therefore evident that the spirit of evangelism is a constant which is grounded in the experience of personal salvation. To release this spirit there must be built such a complex. If any spirit is created other than this complex, it is a foreign spirit and not the spirit of true evangelism. It is also clear that evangelism conceived as a spirit is something fundamental, deeply grounded in the reality of religious experience. The fact which is most evident is this, that the building of religious experience is more vital than the attempt to create an evangelistic spirit through some artificial means. True evangelism rises out of the experience of those who are saved and the spirit of evangelism will never be able to go beyond the bounds of experience. The searching question which comes to every leader and teacher of religion is this: Is the church efficient in the building of a religious complex which will give rise to the spirit of evangelism?

Elements in the Complex

What then is this complex? What are the essential elements of such a relationship? What is necessary to release the spirit of evangelism? An analysis of Christian experience will set forth some of these elements. Such a study discloses that there is implied:

(1) A definite experience of personal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ which includes the regeneration of the soul, the restoration of the life, and

the witness of the Spirit. This experience may vary in content, vividness, and challenge, but it is definite and personal. It is not possible to confine experience to one mold, but if it is to be real and satisfying, it must be personal and renewing. No one will be greatly enthused in the effort to win others to Christ who does not find a satisfying experience of salvation in Christ himself. If religion lacks experiential value in terms of personal salvation, it fails to beget spirit. The content of salvation varies, but the fact must ever be a satisfying reality in terms of experience.

(2) A conscious personal fellowship with God, in and through Christ, through prayer, the study of the Word, and Christian service. God is not only discoverable but in Christ he becomes companionable. Christian experience is not a mere transaction by which an adjustment has been accomplished, but a life through which the presence and power of God becomes more and more a reality in experience. It means more than an idea of God, or a theory about God, or an argument to establsh the existence of God; it means a sense of God which surcharges all of life, and brings peace and quietness, poise and purpose, principle and power. It was this sense of God which enabled the Apostle Paul to say, "I can do all things in Him who strengtheneth me."[3]

(3) A clear conviction of the reality and destructiveness of sin. Unless there is such a valuation of life that the work of sin is seen in its destructive nature, there will be lacking the spirit of evangelism. If there is no sin, or if sin is merely a mistake, a retarded development, a mental error, then there is no real salvation. If there is no real salvation, then evangelism loses its meaning and challenge. Jesus was

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[3] Phil. 4:13.

held to the great purpose of saving men because he believed men to be lost and needing salvation. It takes such an appraisal of life to beget the spirit of evangelism.

(4) A true appreciation of the worth of personality. Jesus expresses such a sense of value when he said, "What shall a man be profited if he shall gain the whole world and forfeit his life? or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?"[4] There is nothing comparable to a human life. It is the greatest value on earth. But life without Christ is losing its value here and now and is a danger of eternal loss. Therefore the great task of the church is to seek and to save the lost.

(5) Obedience to, and empowering through the Holy Spirit. Only as the life is subject to the Holy Spirit will there be an experience which will create and maintain the spirit of evangelism. The ancient prophet was told long ago that not might nor power, but the spirit is the essential factor. The work of evangelism is that of the Holy Spirit. That fact must ever be remembered, yet it must also be remembered that the Holy Spirit works through human personalities. He can accomplish the work best when he is able to enrich the experience of the believer so that the love of Christ in the heart, through the operation of the Holy Spirit, becomes the impelling power through which the life is urged to sacrificial self-giving and service.

These elements here enumerated are the essentials of a genuine Christian experience. To create and release the spirit of evangelism means, therefore, to lead the believers into vital Christian experience. If people will live vital Christian lives there will be the spirit of evangelism. If they will fail so to live, nothing can make evangelism really vital. This way of promoting evangelism may be somewhat more difficult than through the popular methods which are at times employed, but will bring far greater results. It is more exacting, but more rewarding. It is less spectacular but more Christ-like. It is the only way which will make evangelism a vital factor and a ministry of moral and spiritual life. To build such a complex there must be Christian teaching which will furnish a reasonable ground for belief and a sure basis for a full commitment of life to God. There must also be created an atmosphere through worship in which it will become easy to sense the presence of God. And yet more, there must be the nurture of the Christian life, through which growth in grace and knowledge is made possible. All this makes it very clear that to promote evangelism is a very inclusive and exacting ministry. For Jesus it meant the giving of all, even his own life. If his followers are willing to yield all and give themselves in sacrificial service there will come a gracious reviving and a glorious triumph of the spirit. To such a ministry the church is called.

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[4] Matt. 16:26.

THE SEARCH IN THE LIFE OF BELIEVERS

A closer examination of the spirit of evangelism reveals the fact that this spirit is a searching agency in the heart of the believer and in human society. While the spirit of evangelism is the resultant of religious experience, it in turn again has great influence upon such an experience. It is the nature of spirit to search out things. The Spirit of God searches out the deep things of God. The spirit of man searches out the deep things of the human personality. The spirit of music searches out the deep emotions of the soul.

The spirit of evangelism searches out the deep things of the moral and spiritual order. There are three realms which are especially searched by the spirit of evangelism.

There is the realm of the moral and spiritual life of the believer. The spirit of evangelism searches out the motive and purpose of life. No one can really give expression to such a spirit who is unwilling to permit the spirit of evangelism to search out the reality of the moral and spiritual state of his own life. This is in full keeping with the fact already pointed out that the spirit of evangelism is the resultant of true experience. Unless such experience harmonizes with the moral and spiritual demands of life there can be no vital spirit of evangelism. Without a right heart there can be no enthusiasm in the effort to build a right order. Personal adjustment to the demands of the moral and the spiritual order is a first essential in evangelism. The Apostle John was right when he said, "If our heart condemn us not we have boldness toward God."[5] Many times people are intimidated and made cowardly in their efforts because their own hearts are not fully in accord with the moral demands of life. They refuse to have their own lives searched out by the Spirit and cleansed, therefore they are limited in their own relation to the work of righteousness.

It is a fundamental requirement of moral and spiritual life and progress, that moral and spiritual power must be resident in the heart of the believer before it can flow out into other lives. Every revival, which means a new moral and spiritual conquest, has its beginning in the life of the believers. Many so-called revivals have been defeated before there was ever any public effort, because the people of God were unwilling to permit the Spirit to search their own hearts. The spirit of evangelism is constantly seeking to search out the life and bring the believer into an ever deepening experience of salvation and spiritual empowering. This aspect of evangelism is not sufficiently recognized and emphasized. Too many people think of evangelism only as an effort to win others to membership in the Christian group and thus enlarge the Kingdom, forgetting that evangelism is as vitally concerned with the building of Christian character as with the winning of new recruits. This truth is implied in the emphasis which the church places upon holiness and victorious living. The saving process must go on in the soul. In fact, the progress made there will largely determine the progress made in Christian living. Religion depleted of moral and spiritual power will not produce vital evangelism. Whenever people are willing to let the spirit of evangelism search out their own lives and bring them under new and added moral and spiritual demands, the work of evangelism will prosper and become a conquering power.

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[5] I Jno. 3:20.

Unless the spirit of evangelism has free course in the life of the believer, there will be lacking that first essential of all evangelism—Christ-likeness. It is not the words, the prayers, the exhortations, or the pleadings which have the greatest power of persuasion, but the character of the life. Before anyone can be really influential in winning others to Christ and to his way of living, he must represent to the world Jesus Christ in his own life. People who are unkind, bitter in criticism, fault finding in spirit, selfish in thought and life, un-Christlike in attitude and relationships, and lacking in moral and spiritual qualities of life, cannot be fruitful in evangelism. Moral and spiritual achievement must always characterize the life of the believer. There must be such a willing conformity to the demands of higher living that the life is not only characterized by a moral and spiritual quality, but is filled and thrilled with a sense of joy and satisfaction resulting from such an experience. In the work of evangelism it must ever be true that "the joy of Jehovah is your strength."[6] Moral and spiritual conquest of the life is not merely something to which one must submit as a necessary religious requirement, but something which brings one into a most satisfying way of living. It is for the joy of such a life that one should be willing to let the spirit of evangelism search out the life.

It should also be noted that this searching is a constant activity. This is true because the moral demands of life are constantly increasing. The moral standards and spiritual vitality of a generation ago do not suffice for the life of the present time. The Holy Spirit is constantly bringing things under new moral evaluations and placing new moral and spiritual demands upon life. The adjustment of life to these is an ever increasing demand of Christian living. One can only enjoy such living if he is willing to let the moral and spiritual character of his life be searched out by this spirit of evangelism, and if he is willing to be led into an ever increasing moral and spiritual endeavor. This implies that the Christian life is a very exacting way of living; that there is no place where one can rest in his endeavors; but that growth, development, increased moral and spiritual achievement are the constant demands of life. To be efficient in evangelism one must be in tune with the moral and spiritual order in its ever enlarging significance and increasing challenge. The life must be in harmony with the moral demands of the age, and free to give a hearty response. This leads the thought into another realm which is being searched by the spirit of evangelism.

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[6] Neh. 8:10.

THE SEARCH IN THE REALM OF HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

The spirit of evangelism also searches the realm of human relationships. While the Christian life is fundamentally personal, a right personal relationship with God, as soon as such a relationship is established it involves human relationships. When one becomes a Christian, he cannot, and if truly saved, would not, wish to withdraw himself from human relationships. He must continue to live in social relationships, making social contacts, and cannot live the life of a hermit if he would exert the largest influence. This fact implies great opportunities. Every relationship into which one enters becomes an evangelistic opportunity. The more social contacts a life makes, the more opportunities that life has for Christian service. The Christian as a member of society stands in various relationships. He stands in relationship with the home, the school, the business world, the political order, and to the social life and activity in the community. In fact, he should stand in a vital relationship with all constructive and cultural agencies which involve human relationships. But while he holds these relationships he holds a distinct attitude toward them. In all his relationships he is a Christian. He is in the world, but not of the world. His relationship is not that of one who seeks to superimpose a theory but of one who interjects a spirit. He is a member of a new, a higher social order, and is seeking to rebuild all human relationships in harmony with that of the Kingdom of God to which he belongs. The Christian way of living is the most daring, the most adventurous, the most revolutionary, and the most exacting way ever attempted to introduce among men. To be a Christian means that one seeks to transform the present order through the spirit and power of Jesus Christ. Sometimes people have attempted to set the individual and the social order over against each other as if they were mutually contradictory and exclusive, but such an attitude is contrary to the New Testament teaching and the best Christian experience. One cannot be a Christian unless he expresses his life in relationships. The moment he does that he is exerting a social influence and power. The Christian religion is both individual and social.

The process through which the social transformation is wrought is the enthronement of Jesus Christ as the Lord of all life. There are some realms of life into which Jesus has been permitted to enter but very little. There are relationships into which his spirit has not been permitted to enter at all. It is here where Chistianity is finding a special contest today. In the thought of many Jesus holds a very prominent place in the realm of religion. He is accepted by many more people today than ever before as pre-eminent in the field of personal life. Through him men come to satisfaction. E. Stanley Jones has well said, other religions lead people "almost" to God and "almost" to a satisfying experience, but Jesus brings man to God through a satisfying experience. But is he also the Lord of all life? The question which is frequently raised is, can he be followed in the building of the larger and more intricate human relationships? Has Jesus a word of reconstruction for the social order? Is there in him the ideal and power necessary to rebuild a world which so sorely needs more adequate and humane relationships? There are many who honestly hope that Jesus does possess such power, but are afraid to make the venture. Others really doubt that He can help in the social problems, at least during the present age. There is great need today for a new affirmation of faith in the power of Jesus Christ to build a better world. Christians should not hesitate so to present Him. This is both the privilege and responsibility of the followers of Jesus.

It seems that at this present time the spirit of evangelism is making some very searching investigations in the realms of the major human relationships. No one can carry on the work of evangelism without finding himself repeatedly confronted with this search of the spirit. The question which presents itself again and again, is this, are the followers of Christ Christian in their relationships? Can the church hope to win in evangelism unless she can make the moral and the spiritual the determining factors in these relationships? These searching questions dare not be evaded. The church must have courage to place her Christian confession over against the political, industrial, racial, national and international attitudes and responses and demand that these embody the mind and spirit of Jesus. If the church is preaching peace and righteousness, but is guided by prejudice, hatreds, and selfishness in these relationships, she cannot hope to commend her religion to the people of this age, in which the search after peace has become such a passion. Human relationships are becoming too urgent to be neglected in the religious life.

Society has come to a serious tension point in the realm of relationships. Some new and satisfying adjustment must be found or these relationships will be the undoing of our civilization. Unless the Christian people are willing to let the spirit of evangelism search out these relationships the church might as well write failure over her efforts. The battle-field on which the spiritual awakening, so greatly needed, will be determined, is not personal religion, but human relationships. This does not mean that social religion is more fundamental than personal religion. Personal religion will always be basic, but it does mean that personal religion must function in human relationships, or there will be a serious reaction against personal religion. There must be a reconstruction of society through the regenerating power of Jesus Christ before human relationships will become just and satisfying. What the individual needs is what society needs. Most of these relationships are still under the dominance of Satan, and in the grip of selfishness, and need to be saved. It is becoming increasingly clear that the evangelism for today must include the presentation of a Saviour who is able to save the individual in his relationships. Is the church willing to let the spirit lead her into this larger ministry of the spirit in the realm of human relationships?

IN SEARCH AFTER THE LOST

More fundamental than all that has already been said, is the fact that the spirit of evangelism is a searching agency after the lost. To be a Christian means that there is an outgoing of life after those who are lost. Whenever evangelism ceases to be such a search it ceases to be true to the ideal and ceases as a spiritualizing power. There must be theories and programs and ideals and methods and adjustments, all of which have their place and value, but fundamentally there must be a soul-passion after the lost which will drive one out in living solicitude to win others for Christ and his church. Such an outgoing of life will find expression in intercessory prayer, in personal testimony and in personal evangelism. Wherever there is the spirit of evangelism, there is this searching after the lost. It has often been pointed out that those who are most active in evangelism are those who have the most satisfying experience of personal salvation. It is not difficult to prove this statement, but may it not also be true that one of the reasons why there seem to be so many people who lack joy and satisfaction in their religious life, is due to the fact that they do not permit the spirit of evangelism to lead them out into a search after the lost. Such an attitude tends to make religion selfish and all selfishness fails to satisfy. The way in which such a search is made differs according to times and circumstances, but the search must continue. Means and methods differ with different individuals and groups, but the yearning after the lost is a common passion of those who love Christ. Jesus in whom the true ideal is found, said that he came to seek and to save the lost. Is it too much to say that the Christian should be like Christ? Out into the highways and byways and into the haunts of sin, where men are without God and without hope, the spirit of evangelism urges the believer to go find the lost and bring them back to Christ.

Much of the evangelism of today lacks this searching element or passion. Too many people are satisfied with general appeals. They help build churches, support church activities, promote church interests, and occasionally participate in special evangelistic efforts, but apart from these there is little definite search after the lost. This failure characterizes the life and activity of many parents, many Sunday School workers and many otherwise good people. Too many think they have met their evangelistic responsibility when they have issued general invitations, made announcements and provided opportunities to which people might respond. Some pastors are much more efficient in the distribution of church notices than they are in ringing door bells and presenting Jesus Christ to others in the home and place of business. Many church officials are more efficient in voting resolutions than in personal evangelism. Evangelism is more than giving people a chance. Jesus said, using the parable as illustration, "Constrain them to come in that my house may be filled."[7] The apostle Paul, speaking of his own ministry, said he was made a minister "to make all men see."[8] Not merely to apprise them of a great fact, but so to make them see that God is in Christ, also to see their own need of Christ, the fullness of life available in and through Christ so that they would not be able to reject his offer of salvation. How many times Christians are defeated in their efforts because they fail to make men see. They do not have the patience to follow up people and try to find their interest, and then so relate Christ to that interest that they cannot rest without him. This is the crux of the whole matter. It is not enough merely to hope for a revival, if people want to see the Kingdom come and souls born into that Kingdom, they must be willing to go out after the lost. The lost ones are all about us. Some in the home, some in the store, some in the street, some in the social group, and some are in the circle of friendships. Is the church willing to let the spirit of evangelism lead her into such a search after the lost?

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[7] Luke 14 : 23.
[8] Eph. 3 : 9,

The church is just beginning to appreciate the fact that there is a great opportunity for formative evangelism. That people should be saved from going into the far country. This applies especially to the work with children and young people. It is a sad fact that so many children who are in the care of the church during the early years of their lives are left to stray away from God and enter lives of sin. This discloses the fact that the church has not been as efficient in her evangelism as she should have been. Through a more adequate program of religious education the church is seeking to correct this fault. But two dangers present themselves. First, there are those who are so enthused over this work of relating a life to God through adequate instruction that they cannot see any need for the child to come into a personal experience of salvation. It should be clearly remembered that not until religion becomes personal in terms of moral and spiritual experience will it be meaningful. It is not necessary to read into the experience of a child moral implications which are foreign to the life, but it is necessary to ground that experience in moral action and invest it with spiritual significance. This is the right of every child. It is more than merely moral education. It is moral and spiritual experience. Second, there are those who see nothing in an evangelism of reclamation. Those who have no place for the revival and those kindred agencies which are specifically used for the winning of the lost through repentance and faith in God. This lack of aggressive outreach after those who have failed and are lost in sin is greatly weakening the church. Even some of the movements launched to reach these are more largely efforts to persuade people to join the Church than they are efforts to persuade people to leave sin and walk in fellowship with God. But what the sinner needs is not a new arrangement of his life, but a new deliverance from the pollution, power and destruction of sin. He needs salvation. Evangelism must ever issue in salvation.

THE SPIRIT OF LOVE

What then is this spirit of evangelism? It may be defined as the plus element in a definite experience of salvation, and a searching power searching out the implications of moral and spiritual living both in the individual and the group. The essential element in this spirit is love. The Apostle Paul gave expression to this spirit when he said, "The love of Christ constraineth us."[9] It is the compulsion of love in the heart which urges men out in search after the lost. The experience of salvation begets love toward God, but also love toward man. It is this love for others that is the deepest meaning of this spirit. It is love which makes evangelism such a fine art. It is love which makes this service such a delight. Sometimes evangelism is presented as a Christian duty, and such it is, but it is more than duty, it is a privilege. Everyone who has ever led another to Jesus Christ knows that it is the supreme privilege of a life.

Love, however, is more than a sentiment. It is impossible to define love for it eludes one when he tries to define it as God eludes one when the effort is made to define him. But love in its essential quality is "sacrificial-social-mindedness." It is that self-giving of life for others which finds expression in a loving solicitude for them. God is love. His love is made manifest by his self-giving. Man's life is to be made perfect in love, that means through self-giving. Here the deepest significance of evangelism is touched. Evangelism grounds itself in sacrifice. All true evangelism rests upon the cross which is the supreme expression of self-giving. When evangelism is the expression of life in terms of loving, wholehearted self-giving, there will be an appeal which will win. There is a great difference between professional evangelism and evangelism of love. How many people have failed in evangelism because they lacked sacrificial-social-mindedness. How much more could be done in the winning of the world to Christ if there were more love for others. When love moves the heart, the treasuries will be replenished, the recruits will be forthcoming, and the plans and the programs will be enlarged. The spirit of evangelism is the outgoing of a heart filled with love for God and man.

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[9] 2 Cor. 5:14.

This outgoing of the soul is also an identification of the life with the sinful and the lost. All the great leaders in evangelism have been possessed of such a sense of identification. No one can really become efficient in this work unless he comes to feel the weight of the sinfulness of others resting upon him. It was this sense of identification with the sinful which led Moses to cry out to God in a great entreaty for his people that God should "forgive," and then added if not, then "blot me out of thy book."[10] It was this which led John Knox to cry out "Give me Scotland or I die." Unless the sin of the world stirs the soul and the lost condition brings such heartache and spiritual yearning, the spirit of evangelism is not the true outgoing of love. When one comes to love people so truly that with the Apostle Paul he can say he is restless until Christ is formed in them, there will be a true outgoing of life in love.

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[10] Exodus 32:32.

In many lives there seems to be lacking such an identification with the sinful in our day. There is a complacency which many good people have in the presence of the work of sin which must grieve the heart of God, because it weakens the work of evangelism. It is only too true that the sinfulness of people does not disturb Christians greatly. People seem to be able to live on without any great concern for the salvation of others. Yet all about them men are in sin, and sin is working its ruinous effect. Lives are wasted, characters are ruined, hopes are blasted and souls are lost. The changing moods of the time have taken away much of the heart-yearning for the salvation of others. The result is that the work of evangelism is not succeeding as it should. In many instances churches still go through the motions of evangelism, but have lost the spirit. If there is to be a more vital evangelism there must once more be a sense of value which will drive the church into prayer and loving solicitude for the lost. There must be a requickening of the sense of responsibility for those who know not God.

There is much interest in evangelism today. Many new methods are being introduced and the whole church is brought face to face with the urgent need of a spiritual revival. It seems this revival is already long overdue, for there are so many things calling for a new visitation of moral and spiritual power. But the Church should be clear on the things which are essential. Unless there will be created and released the spirit of evangelism this whole movement will be superficial and lacking in soul quality. Like every other life-movement, evangelism is determined by the spirit. Unless there is the spirit of evangelism there will be no true evangelism. That spirit is the resultant of a vital experience of salvation, the outgoing of a life in love. It is a loving outreach after the lost. This spirit is created and released through the operation of the Holy Spirit in the life of the individual and the church. The more the Holy Spirit is utilized the more the spirit of true evangelism will become manifest and operative.

CHAPTER III

EVANGELISM AND THE NEW ORDER

THE SEARCH AFTER THE NEW

THE urgency for a new order is keenly felt in every realm of thought and life. The old order no longer fully satisfies. It is no longer adequate for the full expression of the new impulses, the new ideals, the new freedom and the new life of this new and increasingly complex age. The particular character of this new order, no one seems able definitely to forecast, but that a new order is needed is a very general conviction. In the field of literature there is an expectation of the new which is stirring literary critics and students. The "most interesting literary question of the present" says a student of modern literature, "is the question whether there exists a new literature of some importance which is unlike any that has been written before."[1]

In the field of psychology the term "new psychology" has become very familiar. The effort to treat human life biologically and make psychology a branch of naturalistic studies is frequently heralded as the dawn of a new day in psychological research. Students in this field are however divided in their opinions as to the results achieved and yet to be achieved.

In the field of theology much discussion has been provoked through the use of the term "new theology." The movement to make theology the science of experience has been gaining in favor and acceptance during recent years. Some people look upon this as a complete break with the past and the full emancipation from all external and historic authority, thus a new theology. Others find in this movement no such break in the continuity of Christian thought and experience, but rather a rediscovery and a re-emphasis of the experiential values of religion.

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[1] Atlantic Monthly, December, 1927, pg. 776.

In the field of economics there is also a search after a new order. Wealth is accumulating, power is increasing, contacts are multiplying, and economic relationships are becoming increasingly complex. New economic theories are being presented, economic experiments are being made and economic release is being sought after. Some very splendid accomplishments are already on record and yet the economic pressure continues to rule under large numbers of people. Some way must be found through which greater justice can be achieved and a more equitable distribution of the fruits of labor made.

In the field of national and world relationships there is also an earnest search after a new order. The spirit of exclusiveness and self-serving which so often characterized nations in the past is evidently a misfit for the present time. There is a growing desire for a world fellowship and friendship which will remove the causes of hatred, fear and enmity and bind the nations of the earth into a great co-operative unity for the ushering in of the day of peace and brotherhood. Some very splendid achievements have been made along these lines through the outlawry of war and the purpose to assume the risks of peace rather than the risks of war. Through the various co-operative endeavors which have been called forth for the purpose of creating mutual understanding and eliciting mutual co-operation much has been done to unify the peoples of the earth. Yet the new day of national and international good-will and mutual service has not yet dawned. There is however a deep longing for such a day to come.

THE DEEPER MEANING OF THIS URGE

This urgency so manifest every where has a deeper significance than external adjustments. Perhaps one reason why its fuller meaning has not become more evident is that fact that many have been, and yet are more concerned with the relationship of the new to the old, than with the effort to release the new. When people are primarily interested in comparisons there is danger that they yield convictions and make unwarranted compromises. A comparative study will not suffice. In most of these realms of thought and life the discussion gathers largely around the question of the arrival of the new. The question most frequently asked is, has it arrived? Some contend it has already come, others can see no evidence of its presence. When the question is raised, what is the new there seems much indefiniteness and uncertainty. Some see in the new only that which has not been, or that which stands in a rather sharp contrast with that which has been, while others see, in the emergence of certain elements into greater prominence and the special emphasis upon that less stressed in the past, all the new which is necessary. The manner in which the new emerges, and the channels through which it comes are interesting studies, but what is of still greater significance is the meaning of the urge. This restlessness, this dissatisfaction with existing conditions, this yearning after something better so widespread in human society is more than an incident. It is a sign of the times. It is a challenge to the church. That such an urge is present is a fact which should be more fully recognized and its significance should be more clearly apprehended. But what does it signify? Merely something new will not meet the issue. What is sought after is a new order which will make possible the larger life which is seeking to find expression in so many different ways.

In searching after the meaning of this urge one must take into account not only the efforts put forth to build a new order but the undercurrents of thought, aspirations and needs. One must take note of the tendencies in history. There are many people in all walks of life who have caught something of the deeper meaning of this urge, who have as yet found no opportunity to undertake a definite construction of the desired order. There are many who are always ready to build even though they understand but little the nature of the building needed. One of the difficulties which must be faced in this effort is this readiness on the part of people with meager information to construct the new order. There are many who are very efficient in tearing down the existing structures and projecting their air castles for the future but it takes more than enthusiasm to bring in this new order. If society is to come into a new experience of freedom and spiritual empowering there must be constructive building. The best in the past must be conserved, but there must be courage to build for the present. If the effort to build such an order implies nothing more than a new arrangement through which more wealth is secured and larger opportunities and greater freedom gained to spend such wealth in various forms of selfish indulgence then there is little value in its coming. If this means nothing more than advancement in material progress then it were better the day should never dawn. Already there are many opportunities for selfish living; already there are vast powers at man's command; already there is great freedom for self-expression; already there are great accumulations of wealth, what is needed is not more material gain, but more motive power, more spiritual-mindedness, more appreciation of values, nobler ideal and a more efficient moral and spiritual control.

THE NEW ORDER AND PROGRESS

There is a growing feeling among many thoughtful people that the future welfare of human society is contingent upon the release of added moral and spiritual power. Great progress has been made during the past one hundred years in the release of natural resources, the discovery of the laws of nature, and their use through applied sciences, but many people are fearful lest these gains will become the powers for the destruction of civilization. The only sure safeguard lies in the release of moral and spiritual power to control these gains and use them for the bringing in of the greater values. It always multiplies the danger when greater powers are bestowed without moral and spiritual power to use such powers. These powers which have come to man through the achievements of the past have placed into man's hands forces so mighty and so destructive that their possession becomes a serious concern to all who love righteousness and seek peace. It is possibly true as some one has aptly put it, that "the world's machinery has become too complicated for the world's engineers,"[2] but the machinery is here and must be used and society must be safeguarded. It is evident that this urge for a new order goes forth out of a real concern for the welfare of society. It is more than a yearning after more wealth and greater freedom, it is rather the outcry of the soul for that power which will save men from forfeiting their lives and society from rushing headlong into ruin.

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[2] Federal Council Bulletin, October, 1927, pg. 5.

This urgency to bring all life under the control of a new moral and spiritual dynamic is finding expression in many places and through different forms. This universality of longing is one of the most hopeful signs of the coming of a better day. Whenever people really long for the better life a new day of redemption is near. Speaking of this longing, Dr. Coffin says, "Our world is supremely wistful for a new spirit. We have glorified, and not without reason, in vast scientific advances which have marvelously altered the externals of life. But the demand of the hour is for inner transformation, for character adequate to manage these hugely augmented forces."[3] There are many who are ignorantly groping after such a new spirit, they know not how to define it, they cannot understand all its implications, but they have a great yearning of soul for something better. Underneath many of the movements of the present day which on the surface seem to be efforts for the realization of specific purposes and the achievement of definite ends, there is a longing for a new spirit. The greatest concern in the labor movement is not larger wages, better working conditions and shorter hours, but a new spirit of brotherhood, a larger opportunity for personal development and a new experience of justice and righteousness. If this urge should fail to find satisfaction in a new moral and spiritual release, humanity will receive a great spiritual disappointment which will retard the progress of civiliaztion for years to come. Civilization has come to a tension point, and progress is waiting for the infusion of a new spirit into society.

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[3] Christian Evangelist, November 10, 1927, pg. 1489.

EVANGELISM IN THE BUILDING OF THE NEW ORDER

It is the deeper meaning of this urge which brings it into such close relationship with the work of evangelism. It is through evangelism that such a release of moral and spiritual power comes to the world. It is evangelism which brings life under the control of the spiritual. This fact needs to be stressed today. There is danger that the limited conception of evangelism which some people have will incapacitate them for this larger service. Something of this larger implication of evangelism has already been pointed out in the previous chapters but there is need of frequent restatement. Evangelism means the spiritualizing of all of life. It is such a glorious work that it includes the individual, but it includes not only all men, but all of man. It is, therefore, a task which demands the best thought and the fullest co-operation. If ever the evangel needed to be taught and preached with clearness and conviction and with special emphasis placed upon the spirit it is at the present time. What the world is searching after can be supplied through genuine evangelism. But if this is to be accomplished the church must give herself more wholeheartedly to this great work. Dr. Schriver has well said, "There is a natural yearning for some great compelling movement of the spirit which shall sweep the church along to new victories. Men have prayed for this. They have asked God for a revival. May his answer possibly be, a new Crusade?"[4] Everyone who is interested in this basic urge should weigh this question with great care. A New Crusade! What a challenge! Possibly the weakness of the church lies in the fact that her thought is too limited, her plans too small, her efforts too meager, and her desires too circumscribed. This is not the time for small things but for an aggressive crusade. There is an answer to the cry of humanity. There is a supply for the need of the world. There is a new order possible. It is the work of evangelism to lead men to the source of supply, and to usher in the better day. There is no other way. Theories will not avail, rearrangements are insufficient, organization alone will not suffice, there must be a new spirit generating a new life. What a challenge this gives to evangelism. Seen in this light there is nothing greater than the work of evangelism.

THE CHURCH THE AGENCY FOR THE RELEASE OF THE SPIRIT

Closely connected with the conviction that the future welfare of society is contingent upon the release of moral and spiritual power, there is also the conviction that the church more than any other organization is the agency through which such moral and spiritual power can be released. While there is no mass movement of any large proportion towards the church, yet the majority of the people look to the church as the minister in the things spiritual. Possibly the situation is more fully expressed by saying that the majority of people are still looking toward the church hoping that through the church relief may come. There are some people who frankly confess that they see no hope apart from the church. This confidence in the church is a great asset in the work of evangelism. The very fact that people look to the church for a spiritual ministry makes the evangelistic appeal and emphasis much stronger and more commanding. This confidence should also cause the church to rekindle the evangelistic spirit and rededicate herself to this great work. The ground of such a confidence lies in the spiritual character of the church. If there is a vital spiritual life in the church the confidence is well founded, if not there is no sure ground. A church lacking in spiritual mindedness, and in spiritual life and power cannot be an agency of such power. What the church seeks to bring to the world must first be in her own experience and life.

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[4] What Next in Home Missions, Schriver, pg. 213.

That there are those who are questioning the ability of the church to prove herself an agency for the release of moral and spiritual power is a fact which must also be carefully noted and which cannot be lightly set aside. Such voices of doubt and misgiving are heard both within and without the church. It is, of course, possible that some people expect too much of the church. There are some who want the church to release such power as one might confer a gift. Such a release of moral and spiritual power is possible only through moral activity. The church cannot confer such power upon society as a friend gives a gift. If the people of the community merely stand by as interested onlookers and wait for some spiritual release to come there will be little help forth coming. More than an expectant attitude is needed. There are in every community good people who look to the church with hope and expectation, but are unwilling to enter into a moral and spiritual endeavor with the church for such a release of moral and spiritual power. One of the first things needful is that the church be given the support of all those who love the truth and are longing for the larger good. In many communities such cooperation is sadly lacking and the result is the church is weakened in her ministry.

This of course implies that the church is really ministering in spiritual things. Sometimes she is busy about lesser interests and neglects this all important work. It is not enough to enroll more members in the church. A larger membership does not necessarily assure spiritual power. In fact sometimes the multiplication of numbers means the lessening of such power. In all efforts to enlist people in the work of the church it should ever be the first concern to initiate them into a spiritual experience and engage them in spiritual activities. This means that people are definitely enlisted in service, also that the church has a worth-while program of service activities. Sometimes churches greatly lack such a program, and when people are brought into membership they have practically nothing to do. But spiritually idle people cannot be a spiritual force. Moral and spiritual activities are essential factors for spiritual influence. The only way through which the church can prove herself an agency of moral and spiritual power is through moral and spiritual activity. Her rituals may be beautiful and stimulate the spirit of worship; her doctrinal statements may be carefully formulated and true to fact; her social life may be genuine and wholesome in its effects, but unless her ministry be one of spirit and life she will fail in her great mission. Whenever a church fails to be a spiritualizing force she fails to elicit confidence on the part of those who are longing for a better day.

It is here where doubt arises in the minds of some people as to the efficiency of the church. No doubt every one who really appreciates the significance of the challenge which this urge is bringing to the church is sometimes led to serious questioning. Will the church respond to the challenge? Can the church call forth that moral and spiritual activity necessary to bring about the spiritualizing of this age? Bishop Manning faces these questions and replies in these words of misgiving: "The church of Christ stands before the world today disqualified for its divine task because of its own differences and divisions."[5] Mr. Green, President of the American Federation of Labor, says, "The call of the hour is to the church to convince the masses of the people of its own faith in the efficiency of the Christian principles in the solution of those problems which create bitterness, strife and divisions between employers and employees."[6] Both of these statements are from churchmen, but imply a fear that perhaps the church will fail to measure up to these great obligations. From outside of the church there are also voices heard which express doubt and misgiving. If one carefully studies the earnest efforts and far reaching activities of many of the extra-church agencies in their effort to grapple with some of the great problems of the day, and then notes the large number of church people who seem to have little time for, or interest in, these larger questions, the question, will the church really measure up to her great opportunity, cannot be evaded. The fact that the church has held, and still holds a place of unquestioned leadership in the community must not blind one to the danger in the present hour. Unless the church can clearly prove through her ministry that she is a leader in the things moral and spiritual, the past record will not save her. She must vindicate her claim by the release of moral and spiritual power. The apostle Paul set forth a great truth when he said that through the church there should be made known the "manifold wisdom of God according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."[7] Such a revealing activity is possible only if there is a spiritual ministry. The church must be filled with the spirit, she must be committed to a spiritual ministry and she must release moral and spiritual power. It is evident therefore that the spiritual state of the church will largely determine her spiritual usefulness.

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[5] Federal Council Bulletin, October, 1927, pg. 6.

[6] Ibid. Oct. 1927.

If evangelism is to become effective in this age the church must definitely commit herself to this task. Such a commitment must include the whole church. Evangelism must be lifted out of the realm of a specialty, and given first place in the thought, the concern, the plan and the activity of the church. The church must whole-heartedly accept the challenge of Jesus and seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness. Some more adequate way must be found for the enlistment of the whole membership of the church in this supreme task. The whole church must become more distinctly evangelistic. Whether or not all the other activities so often included in the program of the church can be carried on is a question of secondary importance, the essential work must be done. That which is first must be given first place.

The tendency in all religion is that people become deflected from the main interest and give undue time and energy to the things which are of lesser significance.

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[7] Ephesians 3:10-11.

This in a measure is true of many churches at the present time. The church has never been more idealistic; she has never carried on a greater number of activities; she has never shown a greater interest in the issues of the day; she has never touched more lives, yet she is often sadly inefficient in this most essential ministry. She is not winning as many to Christ as she should. She is not producing as much vital Christian living as she should. She is making many contacts but her spiritual impact is too often lacking in influence and power. A very small percentage of the membership in most churches is participating in the work of the church in any vital manner. Many who hold membership in the church are showing little if any difference from those not so related in their way of living. There is greatly lacking the emphasis upon the one essential thing. The question is frequently asked, has the church too many interests today? A superficial survey might lead one readily to answer, Yes, but a more careful study of the church will hardly warrant such an answer. The church is not doing too much. With so many people, members of the church, doing practically nothing, therefore religiously unproductive, she cannot be charged with too much activity. The difficulty lies rather in the fact that the church has failed to relate all her activities to the one unifying and spiritualizing task which is evangelism. Her activities are often too greatly unrelated. They lack meaning and challenge. They fail to produce satisfying returns. Statistics do not tell the whole truth but they reveal some things. Statistics of recent years have not been too assuring. There are many congregations which are very active and yet report not a single individual added to their number through confession of faith during the whole year. They are doing many things, but fail to do the essential thing. These are not only isolated instances but about one third of all the Protestant churches are unproductive when tested by this standard. Surely the church cannot be a minister of the spirit if she fails to lead people into the spiritual life. Such conditions would not be possible if the church were definitely committed to the work of evangelism. She cannot spiritualize the community unless she first spiritualizes her own membership. The call of the hour is urging the whole church to a new commitment to the work of evangelism.

REQUICKENING OF THE SENSE OF THE PRESENCE OF GOD

Such a commitment implies the requickening of the sense of the presence of God in the life, as a reality and dependable object of religious dependence. There is much vagueness in the conception of God in the thought of many people. This is true of people in the church as well as people outside of the church. The many articles which have appeared in recent literature reveal the fact that there is widespread interest in the fact of God. But while there is a very general belief in God as an ultimate fact, there is much indefiniteness as to the meaning and character of this fact. That God in some way must be the sustaining power in the world seems a reasonable conclusion; that in some way he must embody in himself the best life is a moral demand; that in him the fullest meaning of all reality must be found is the demand of reason, but that he is a personal spirit of fatherly nature with whom man can enter into conscious personal fellowship and from whom spiritual blessings are received is a conception which many seem to find difficult to accept and make real and meaningful in their lives. Some try to believe this but seem to be unable to find verification in their own consciousness. This indefiniteness is disturbing not only many who have been initiated into modern scientific ways of thinking, but also many who have had no scientific training. It is evident that the church has failed to release a clear and satisfying God-consciousness in her own membership and in the community. Possibly the multiplication of sufficiencies through modern applied sciences has done much to divert the thought from God as the object of dependence to that of human knowledge and skill. Perhaps, too, the failure on the part of the church to think through her belief in God in terms of modern knowledge has caused doubt and hesitancy. If evangelism is to become a vital factor there must be a rediscovery and a reaffirmation of the fact of God in the moral consciousness of man.

The chief cause of failure lies in the fact that the church has often been trying to satisfy the religious consciousness with a conception of God which failed to meet the moral demands of man. Some tried to impose a scientific conception which made God little more than a name, others sought to present God in terms of a moral order which no longer satisfies the moral demands of man. It may be enough for the physicist and the chemist to think of God as law; it may be enough for the philosopher to think of him as a vital force, but for the religious consciousness these definitions are wholly inadequate. God must be personal, he must be free to hear and help, he must be a being with whom man can establish personal relationships if he is to have meaning for the religious needs of man. Unless religion furnishes such a consciousness of right personal relationship with God, it will not satisfy the deepest longings of the human soul and be nothing more than a social theory. If there is no personal God with whom man can enter into fellowship, the fact of God loses its meaning and the result is that religion loses its power. In the disclosure of God made by Jesus the personal is always stressed. For him God was not an idea, or an influence, or a spiritual environment, or a power, but a personality. He spent whole nights talking with this personality, his supreme purpose in all of life was to do the will of God as the supreme personality and he made the great committal of life to God. He fully trusted the unseen one. He did not argue the personality of God but established the truth through his own life. It takes such a conception of God to bring forth spiritual religion. Such a conception is not unscientific but reaches beyond the bounds of descriptive science. It is the conviction arrived at when one thinks logically, sincerely and deeply into questions of value, purpose and ultimate reality.

It is true that God always eludes the highest thought, for he is greater than man's thought of Him. No man can fully comprehend God nor adequately define him. This search after God characterizes every age. Possibly more than ever the truth of the ancient wise man that no man can by searching find out God unto perfection, forces itself upon all thoughtful men, yet the search continues.[8] It must continue for man is dissatisfied until he finds satisfaction in God. The human heart instinctively reaches out after God. But in this search man is not left to reason alone. There is nothing in the realm of reason to deny God, rather much to affirm such an existence, but in all ages God has been found much more truly through the heart than the intellect. It is when man makes a moral response to God that he becomes most fully assured that God is, and what he is. The deepest meaning of such a response lies in the realm of need. God has always been most fully discovered when men sought after him through a sense of need. May it not be that one reason why there is so much indefiniteness about God is because people use him so little? When people try to find God through speculation he eludes them, but when they seek after him as the source of moral life and spiritual empowering they find him. In recent years many sufficiencies have been built up and the need of God has been denied in many realms of thought and life. But these sufficiencies are often devoid of moral and spiritual qualities and fail to meet the needs of men in times of stress and strain. When people become really in earnest morally and spiritually they soon discover that these sufficiencies will not suffice and that they need God. This too has its meaning for evangelism. Unless there will be awakened such a moral sense, that the need of God will once more send men in search after God, there will be little moral and spiritual power released. The sense of the presence of God in the life is a vital factor in true evangelism.

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[8] Job 11:7.

The release of such a sense of the presence of God is contingent upon moral action. There is much need of more earnest thinking on this subject. Many religious leaders are merely passing on the thoughts of others and are not giving themselves to constructive thinking. The great Christian convictions are too often superficially dealt with. It is not enough to present these in current language and figures of speech taken from recent literature. Such efforts are often mistaken for real thinking. These great convictions must be thought through in the light of the larger knowledge which has come to man. They must be properly related to the great facts of science and history. There is much uncertainty today because there is often lacking vital thinking. There is also much need of a courageous reaffirmation of the great truths of moral and spiritual living. Much of the teaching and preaching of the present time lacks the note of conviction and assurance. Many voices are heard and opinions listed, but often it seems as if the voice of God were little heard. The prophets of the Old Testament who stirred the people to action came with the message saying, "Thus saith the Lord". Unless those who teach have deep convictions they will fail to call forth a sense of God. But the greatest need is moral action. Whenever people are moved by a sense of moral command and feel themselves challenged by great moral issues they instinctively feel themselves driven to God. Much of modern religion lacks such a moral passion. It is marked by noble ideals, correct beliefs and cultural values, but lacks moral content and power. Often the great moral issues are evaded and the church seeks to carry on without entering into moral endeavors. That weakens and impoverishes religion. God has set before the church of this age a great moral challenge which, if she will accept, will help her to recover her sense of the presence of God. If she will refuse to accept this challenge she will lose her place of leadership and become spiritually impotent. This is why the evangelism for the present age must deal with man's related life as well as with the individual. The call of the hour is for more aggressive moral action.

REVITALIZING CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

Such a commitment also implies the revitalizing of Christian experience. There is also much indefiniteness and uncertainty in the thought of many people with reference to the content and meaning of Christian experience. The larger knowledge of nature, and the fuller understanding of the psychic laws have tended to make many elements in Christian experience less definite and so largely a matter of personal adjustment that the question of the Divine element in such an experience is greatly disturbing some people. If God has no place in such an experience then what becomes of those doctrines upon which the church bases her evangelistic appeal? Many people have tried to reduce religion to nothing more than a choice of the better life and a search after the highest good. They have substituted decision for experience; church membership for the new birth; personal adventure for the witness of the Spirit and a purpose to strive after the better life for a sense of sonship. They have largely deleted the Divine from Christian experience and reduced the whole process to one of human endeavor. The fuller revelations of the human personality which have come through the study of modern psychology have great value for the promotion of the spiritual life. Through these investigations the laws of the spiritual life are more clearly discerned. The Spirit of God works through these laws. The more these are understood and observed the more efficient one can be in the promotion of the spiritual life. It should, however, be carefully noted, that the discription of the process is not identical with the experience. There is a vast difference between the two. Description deals with laws and principles, experience with relationships. Religion in its essential characteristic is relationship, but relationship has little significance unless it becomes experience. This fact needs to be stressed more today. There seems to be a tendency to give description a more prominent place than experience in some parts of the church. Perhaps this fact that too often more attention is given to description than to experience is one reason why many people are indefinite in their Christian experience.

In the revitalizing of experience it is necessary to distinguish between a real experience and an experience of reality. If religion is essentially relationship then the experience of reality is essential in religion. There are many aspects of religion and religious activity which are productive of real experiences, but often lack the element of contact with reality. Unless there is such conscious contact with reality there is no experience of reality. One may enthuse over an idea, and such enthusiasm may give rise to a real experience, but if the idea cannot be carried over into the realm of reality the enthusiasm cannot abide and the experience satisfy. One may have a real experience in anticipation of a visit to some historic place, but unless the visit can actually be made there will be lacking the experience of reality. When the steamer Eastland sank in the Chicago river some years ago carrying so many people to a sudden death, the news spread to one family that their daughter had lost her life in this tragic way. Through this announcement the home was filled with sadness and deep sorrow reigned everywhere. So real was the experience that the people could neither rest nor eat, but when late in the evening the daughter was safely returned home it became clearly evident that their experience was not one of reality. The child away from home has many experiences thinking about home and loved ones, but there is a vast difference between the experience of thinking about the home and visiting the home. When the door of the old home is once more opened and the child enters the familiar scenes and is permitted to enter the fellowship with the loved ones there is an experience of reality. Any one who has ever been away from home, and then permitted to revisit the old home knows very well that there is a vast difference between a real experience and an experience of reality. The difference is found in the conscious contact. Just so there is a vital difference between religious ideas, ideals, aspirations and yearnings, and conscious contact with the object of religious dependence. Those who have made such contact have come into an experience of reality which carries with it a sense of certitude and assurance. Religion is more than a theory, an adventure and a striving, it is a discovery, a conscious relationship and a personal assurance. The one who has come into such an experience is able to say, "I know". Such an experience removes indefiniteness, uncertainty and brings peace and joy and satisfaction. It is this aspect of experience which needs to be stressed more and more today.

Such an experience of reality implies a conscious personal relationship with God through which the reality of God is so vividly impressed upon the life that it remains as one of the great abiding convictions of life. It also implies a conscious experience of the forgiveness of sin and the implanting of a new spirit in the life. It implies an experience of a life of saving fellowship with God through which there comes a daily enrichment and empowering to live the victorious life, and the experience of a new power through which the power and influence of sin are checked and the love of God shed abroad in the heart. It also carries with it a sense of command through which the life is urged out into service for Christ and the church. Those who have come into such an experience will be impelled by the satisfactions found to seek to win others into such an experience. It is both a pity and a great loss that so many people in the church seem to be lacking such an experience of reality. Before there can come to the church a new visitation of moral and spiritual power there must be greater efficiency in making contact with reality. Such contact opens the way for God to enter into human life and relationships with his power to save and build a spiritual world.

To lead people into such an experience of reality is one of the most difficult tasks which the church has to perform. It is difficult because people differ so greatly in their response to reality. Some seem to be able to grasp this truth with great clearness and commit themselves without reserve, while others are hesitant and find the life of faith obstructed with many difficulties. Each individual presents a definite problem, and must be dealt with according to the individual need. This has not always been observed in the special evangelistic appeals, nor in the building of worship programs. Too often the mass ideal has prevailed, therefore, the church has not been as successful in the work of leading the individual into the experience of reality as she should have been. It is also difficult because of the influence of modern thought on religious experience. Recent scientific thinking has raised many problems in the realm of religion and religious experience. It helps little to try to convince one's self that there is no conflict between science and religion. Fundamentally that is true, but in practical life it is just as true that for many people there is serious conflict. Not many people live in the realm of fundamental things where these differences are dissolved in one glorious unity of truth. It is due to the superficial way of thinking and living that there has been and is such great conflict, but, even though the cause may be discerned, the fact must be faced. There is much confusion as to the relation of modern knowledge and the things of the Spirit. The greatest difficulty lies not in the denials which have been made, human need will remove such denials, but in the mastery of nature and life achieved which seems to make God so little needed in the world. There has been released a rather general feeling that one can quite well get along without God. It is this fact which makes it more difficult to lead people into an experience of reality in which they will discover God as a reality. Another reason why this is difficult is the fact that so many people are so busy with the things of sense and time that it is hard to arrest their attention and elicit their interest in the things of the spiritual. There seem to be so many things to think about and to occupy one's time that the things of the spirit are largely neglected. The increased use of the things of the physical order have so largely destroyed the capacity to receive the things of the Spirit.

With reference to these difficulties, three things should be carefully noted. First, there should be a frank study of religious truth in the light of modern knowledge. Denunciations will help little. Unless religion can be given a vital place in modern life all arguments in favor of religion will avail little. Religious life must be vitally related to the life people live here and now. Religion must add something which has value and challenge. This the Christian religion does. Modern thought has not made religion obsolete and God unnecessary, but rather it has made religion more essential and God more necessary. It has already been pointed out that the recent discoveries and inventions make the release of moral and spiritual power more urgent if human welfare is to be safeguarded. But these facts are not discovered unless there is clear thinking. Second, there must also be a proper discipline in Christian thinking and living. It takes time to sense spiritual things. Most people give too little time for such culture. People sometimes wonder why it is that spiritual things are so difficult to get hold of, but fail to note that they give practically no time to the culture of the life in the art of spiritual discernment. Those who have achieved most worthily in this life are those who have given most time to the culture of the spiritual life through prayer, meditation, the study of the Scriptures, and season of retirement and waiting upon God. Third, religion must present more of the moral challenge. This has already been emphasized in the preceding discussion. Religion and morality are not the same, but religion does not become vital unless the moral is stressed. That which gives to religion its greatest challenge is the moral ideal which it seeks to make operative in the life and relationships of man. When this is properly emphasized there will be a revitalized religious experience.

THE REUTILIZING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

In all efforts to release moral and spiritul power the work of the Holy Spirit is an essential. The Holy Spirit makes people restless in their achievements and instills in their souls longing for a fuller life. Evidences of his working are seen today in this longing for a new order. But he can only perform his work through human beings who are yielded to his leadership and receptive for his empowering. He is given to be man's helper in the things moral and spiritual, but too often he is not recognized nor used. There are some religious leaders who point with satisfaction to the fact that the Holy Spirit is little mentioned in many churches, believing that in this there is a sign of progress. This is, of course, largely based upon the desire to rid the church of difficult doctrines and simplify the conception of God. But such a conception is contrary to the teaching of the Scriptures and the testimony of history. Jesus placed great emphasis upon the Holy Spirit and charged his followers not to undertake their great work until they should be empowered by the Holy Spirit. The church has always been most efficient morally and spiritually when she has used the Spirit. It is rather a sign of weakness than of strength that this Divine helper is so largely neglected in many churches. The church cannot succeed without the Spirit. There should be a renewed effort to reutilize the Spirit in the work of evangelism. In a later chapter the need and work of the Holy Spirit will be more fully treated, but it should be carefully noted that if this urge for a better day is to find expression in a new release of moral and spiritual power the Holy Spirit must be given his rightful place in the thought and life of the church. This need not lead to unfruitful discussion in terms of definitions and distinctions. The greatest need is not for definition, but use. The early church did not spend much time defining the Holy Spirit, but in keeping with the promise of Jesus waited for his empowering, then went forth under his direction and rendered a great service. When later she gave herself to the writing of definitions she largely lost his power. Many people seem to confuse definitions with reality. Definitions are only man's description of reality, but the experience is the resultant of the impact of reality upon man. What is needed more than definition is the empowering impact. But let not the fear of differences in definition intimidate the church in her privilege of laying hold of the power.

A NEW MORAL AGGRESSIVE

Such a commitment also implies a new moral aggressive. The need of moral action has been mentioned repeatedly, but several things should be set forth with greater clearness. First there should be a new moral aggressive for the vindication of the Christian principle in terms of living. Often people try to vindicate this principle through argument and the setting forth of theories, but the only truly convincing vindication is through living. It is rather humiliating that there are many, especially among those in the non-Christian lands, who are today saying, "we want Christ, but not Christianity." What is Christianity? Without attempting any technical definition may we not say, Christianity is the way in which Christian people express their love for and loyalty to Jesus Christ in terms of living. When thought of in this way it is evident that this objection to Christianity is at least in a measure an indictment of Christian living. It is, of course, much easier to criticise than it is to live the life. It is possible that too much weight is given to external things and not enough to motive. Man still looks upon the outward life while God looks upon the heart, yet it should not be overlooked that Christianity is a way of living. It was so designated before it was given any other name. It must be a way of living if it is to win. It must be the way of living which vindicates the Christian principle. This aspect of Christianity is receiving all too little attention today by many Christian people. There is great need of a moral aggressive for the vindication of the Christian principle through Christ-like living.

Second, there is also needed a moral aggressive for the application of the Christian principle in the life of the group as well as in the life of the individual. While the focal point in Christianity is always in the individual, the individual cannot be held apart from the group. Individual rectitude and moral integrity are basic, but these cannot be limited to the individual life only. They apply to the group as well. The same moral law which governs the individual must also govern the group. If it is wrong for the individual to steal, it is wrong for the group to steal whatever the name or form may be; if it is wrong for the individual to use force, then it is wrong for the group to use force; if it is wrong for the individual to take advantage of another for his own profit, then it is wrong for the group to take advantage of others; if it is wrong for the individual to kill without being attacked, then it is wrong for a group to engage in aggressive warfare; and if it is wrong for the individual to serve self, then it is wrong for the group to make the profit motive the determining factor in its activities. There has been altogether too little moral sense in group life. Too many people have been ready to excuse the group in wrong doings which they would severely denounce in individual lives.

This fact introduces a very large and unconquered field. Much of the organized life of the present time is largely pagan and has never yet become subject to the Christian principle. Most of this is organized on the basis of self-interest, carried on in a competitive spirit, and exists largely for material profit. This cannot continue and religion thrive. Man cannot hope to succeed in making the world Christian unless he is willing to make Christ supreme in all of life. Man's related life must express the Christian principle as well as his personal and private life. The church true to her message and ministry stands committed to the fact of the reality and worth of personality, therefore, cannot condone any practice which treats man as less than personal. Mr. Green is right when he says the church "must exercise its moral and spiritual influence on the side of justice, fair dealing and human betterment."[9] Dr. F. C. Eiselen points out the need of an aggressive along these lines in these very searching words, "Our prevailing social order has been based upon self-interest and has been utterly un-Christian. Until competition is replaced by co-operation and self-interest by service there can be no healing of the nations."[10] The truth should be fully faced; if the church cannot make the Christian principle operative in man's related life she cannot win the world to Christ. But it should also be carefully noted that the church can thus serve humanity, and since she has the power, she also has the responsibility. In the words of Mr. George Wickersham, "Whence shall our people derive their inspiration for high endeavor, unselfish action and enlightened self government if not from the churches of Christ? Their's is the responsibility for the awakening of the best moral sentiment, the most unselfish action, and the most intelligent conduct of which we are capable . . . If the church has no opinion on such subjects as these she must renounce all claim of moral leadership"[11]. There are many who believe that the battlefield of the coming revival will be in the field of human relationships. If the church can Chrisianize the organized life she can hope for a real spiritual revival.

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[9] Federal Council Bulletin, October, 1927, pg. 12.

[10] International Journal of Religious Education, Sept., 1927, pg. 21.

Third, there is also needed a moral aggressive in evangelism itself. It has already been indicated that a truer conception and a more vital evangelism are needed. Such an aggressive implies first of all true and efficient moral leadership. In some evangelistic efforts there has been a lowering of the standard when it comes to leadership. Some people have been permitted to lead in this work who would not be permitted to assume leadership in any other realm of thought and life. Some leaders lack moral fitness; others lack intellectual fitness; others lack spiritual fitness. Evangelism cannot become a vital power unless more attention is given to the matter of leadership. There are men and women of true character in this work, but there are others who are so biased, and given to peculiarities that they have no place in this high and holy service.

In too many methods there is lacking moral and spiritual passion. There seems to be a feeling all too current that evangelism can be accomplished through some means without real soul agony. All kinds of popular devices are used to attract and move people. Some of these are successful in catching people but fail to leave wholsome effects after the catch has been made. It is these things which cause conditions in some places to be worse after a revival than before. It is still true that a real spiritual awakening is possible only when people are willing to pay the price of earnest soul agony. A revival born out of moral earnestness may not be a mass movement but will leave its wholesome effects upon the whole community. It is said that "the moral tone of Europe was purified and elevated for two centuries by the revival inaugurated by Francis of Assisi. Mercy, gentleness, ministration to the outcast and the degraded, distinguished those who caught and kept its fire"[12]. It is such revivals which enrich all of life.

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[11] Federal Council Bulletin, November, 1927, pg. 6.

In many evangelistic efforts selfish interests make impossible the largest results. Both leaders and people are too often motivated by self interest instead of the salvation of others and the building up of the believers. Sometimes leaders build everything about themselves that they may have good reports and good collections. Sometimes congregations build everything about themselves that they may gain more members to help pay the bills. This is true within the denominations themselves and is sadly true in interdenominational relationships. There is great evangelistic promise in the effort of the present time to bring about greater comity between the churches. The Christian forces are too greatly divided. Possibly the day of church union in an organic way has not yet come, but the day for the practice of the spirit of unity is here. Bishop Gore has stated this very suggestively when he says, "If we can learn to act as one body on the moral and social field we may become better fitted in another generation to approach doctrinal and sacramental unity."[13] The competitive methods in evangelism must give way to co-operative endeavors. The church must lift the salvation of souls and the release of moral and spiritual power above all narrowness and selfishness and give herself wholeheartedly to the great work of evangelism.

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[12] Christian Work, Howard Chandler Robbins, Aug. 25, 1923, pg. 239.

[13] Federal Council Bulletin, November, 1927, pg. 3.

All this suggests that there must be a new and enlarged application of the truth of Christ for human redemption. There is a much larger task resting upon the church today then ever before. More is expected of her. Her opportunity is also greater. The world is waiting for a new experience of the Spirit. But the task is not greater than the resource. All the resources of grace are at the disposal of the church. She need not falter nor fail. If she will lay hold upon her strength she will prevail. God is ready to use his church in this day of world need, is the church ready to be used?

CHAPTER IV

EVANGELISM IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

THE LARGER TASK

THE task which the Christian Church faces today is a complex, inclusive and exacting one. That this task is larger than that which any previous generation was called upon to assume is generally accepted, but what the task really implies is not so clearly defined. During the past ten years there has been an earnest effort to study this task and understand its implications and challenge. Many discussion groups have been organized, many committees and commissions have been appointed and many conferences have been held, all for the purpose of coming to a clearer understanding of what the work of the church is in this age of reconstruction and rediscovery. It is true that the findings presented have not always been accepted, the definitions have not always been agreed to; the duties suggested have not always been clearly outlined and the discussions have led to sharp differences of opinion, but the desire to know and to understand has been genuine. The church has been, and today is, earnestly seeking to know her duty and her privilege in this time of unprecedented problems and opportunities. While there has not yet been achieved that unanimity of purpose which many feel must characterize the church, yet there is clearly evident a growing consciousness of at least some of the implications of this enlarged task, and a desire to make the church more efficient in her ministry. When once this effort on the part of the church to measure and evaluate her task can rightly be appraised, it will no doubt be seen that this is one of the most interesting chapters in all church history.

1 One of the first discoveries which was made in this study was the fact that if a larger ministry is to be assumed and carried on by the church her resources must be increased. In most churches the resources were inadequate for the task already outlined and accepted. How could a larger task be undertaken? This consciousness led the church to the most heroic effort ever attempted to release money for kingdom building. This effort stands unparalleled in the history of Protestant Christianity. Millions of dollars were brought into the treasuries of the denominations as willing offerings over and above the regular gifts contributed, that the church might carry on a larger ministry. This response to an appeal for enlarged funds to undertake a larger ministry is one of the assuring facts that the church is today seeking to do her duty in making her contribution to the needs of the hour. When people are willing to give largely of their accumulation of material things, they will also have a response to the spiritual appeal. This effort of the church has already profoundly influenced the whole program of the church not only in the way of reinforcing agencies and institutions, but also in stimulating larger giving of life and substance for the program of the church.

2. A larger program also calls for more workers. It is natural that in the first attempt to call out workers the ministry, the mission field and similar opportunities for service were especially stressed. Here, too, the response was assuring. The cause of Christ still appeals to the youth of the church who in large numbers presented themselves as volunteers for definite Christian service. Through these responses the

church has been greatly strengthened both at home and abroad. But a more careful survey of the task has made it clear that not only are recruits needed for these distinctive types of Christian work, but the sphere of Christian service must be greatly enlarged and the number of Christian workers increased. This has led to the multiplying of Christian activity. There are many more realms of life entered by those definitely interested in building the Kingdom than ever before. Here too there has been some difference of opinion. Some people have feared this enlargement lest the distinctive Christian emphasis should suffer. But there has been a steadily enlarging field and ministry in the sphere of Christian service which has called forth an increased enlistment of workers. The two activities which stand forth in greatest prominence are religious education and social service. Both of these again include numerous ministries. The enlarging of the field shows clearly that the church is seeking to measure up to her responsibility.

The one fact which is stirring the church most however is that if this task is to be performed there must be a new empowering of the Spirit. There is a common longing for a visitation of the Spirit. This has led the churches to give more serious attention to the work of evangelism. Departments of evangelism have been created in most of the churches. Secretaries of evangelism have been chosen to promote this work. Plans of evangelism are worked out with ever increasing care and urgency. It is seen with increasing clearness that unless the church ministers in the spirit, she is failing to give her best to the world. This enlarged spiritual service is making needful a larger ministry in the local church. While the denomination may promote a program, the carrying out of the program depends upon the local church. If one half of the local churches support such a program there can be fifty per cent efficiency, if three fourths of the churches support it a larger efficiency is possible; if all the churches support such a program then the largest efficiency is possible. There is no such a thing as a denominational program apart from the local church. This fact should be carefully noted.

THE LOCAL CHURCH AND THE DENOMINATION

The local church is the basic agency for the release of those resources through which such a larger program can be carried out. This is true with every phase of the program. The money comes through the local church; spiritual resources come through the local church, and the achievement of the work must be by the local church. If the channels are blocked in the local church the work of the denomination and the kingdom is hindered. This makes the work of the local church of very great importance. Any movement which fails to center in the local church cannot succeed. But it should also be noted that there is a complementary relationship between the local church and the denomination. Not only is the denomination dependent upon the local church, but the local church is also dependent upon the denomination. The local church needs the fellowship of the larger group for its own good. Independent congregations may thrive for a while, but their history shows that the lack of contact with the larger group seriously handicaps such congregations in their development. The most vital life in the local church is possible only when there is a co-operative relationship with the larger Christian movement. Without such contacts the vision would be limited, the purposes lack challenge, the outlet for the spiritual gifts and services be few and the local church becomes self-centered and selfish. But selfishness is always a deadly foe of spiritual religion. No person can prosper in spiritual living who is selfish, neither can any group prosper when selfishness becomes the dominant motive. In many local churches there is today a lack of spiritual vision and vitality which seems to be directly due to lack of contact with the larger fellowship. With the introduction of the budget system into the church there has also come a lessening of general interpretation and appeal. The budget principle is sound and the budget system far better than the spasmodic giving of the past, but the operation of the budget system lacks the educational element in many churches. The interests of the general church are not vividly brought to the attention of the people. Although offerings are presented, their purpose is little understood. The result is that there is a falling off in gifts for these larger interests and fewer volunteers for definite Christian service. While there has been increased giving for local purposes, unless the church will again come under the challenge of the larger contact, support of the local church will also suffer. The local church and the larger interests of the kingdom are mutually complementary, and unless this relationship is maintained there will be serious loss for both. This fact has deepest significance for the work of evangelism.

DISCOVERING VALUES

A careful study of the local church discloses the disturbing fact that comparatively few people are definitely related to the great program of evangelism.

There have always been, and there are today, devout souls deeply interested in evangelism, and ready to give themselves to such a spiritual ministry. But they have always been in the minority. Somehow, the work of evangelism has not gripped the thought and life of a large number of church members. There were times when special efforts aroused considerable interest, but even many who attended these meetings were more interested in the methods used by others than in a personal participation in the work. This lack of vital interest and co-operation is one of the greatest obstacles in the way of an efficient evangelism. But such a condition can be changed. Interest can be created. In politics, in social life, in the economic relationships interest is created.. A Community may have no interest in a certain product, but those who seek to sell that product do not take that as a defeat. They rather accept it as a challenge and give themselves carefully to change the condition and create a market for the product. It may take considerable time, but time is no object. It may mean considerable expense, but that does not discourage them. Their purpose is fixed, and they work thoughtfully, consistently, continuously until their object is achieved. Something of that faith in the possibility of changing conditions is needed in the work of evangelism. Too often pastors and leaders surrender to the conditions and fail to give themselves with purpose to create interest and elicit a response. Interest in evangelism can be created if there is willingness to pay the price.

Interest in any cause or endeavor usually grows out of a sense of value. People rarely get more than they plan for; they usually plan for what they want; they want what has become a need in their lives; they discover such need by taking measurement by a standard, and they determine need by their sense of value. During the war when certain restrictions were placed upon foods and subsitutes offered, a group of women were gathered to receive instruction in the use of these substitutes. A woman who rarely ever attended any public lectures, and was seldom seen in the social gatherings of women, was sitting on the front seat listening to every word and presenting frequent questions to the instructor. Why was she so much interested? The answer is plain. There was a value in that meeting for her. She had to use substitutes. To know how best to use them had become a conscious need in her life. She was deeply interested because she had discovered a sense of value. If people can be led to see value in evangelism, they will be interested.

Several things will greatly help in the discovery of value. The presentation of evangelism in sermon, address, and group discussion will do much to awaken a sense of value. The setting forth of the interest of others in this work, will help to stimulate interest and elicit participation on the part of the indifferent. Sometimes the story of a life given to God in definite evangelistic efforts will serve as a means to stir other hearts. The circulation of books and other literature will also prove helpful. Occasional reports of the progress which is being made in the winning of others for Christ and the bringing in of the kingdom will enthuse and call forth action. Above all, a clear setting forth how each one can have a definite part in such a great and glorious work will create interest. Many people have never been helped to see that they can have such a part. They think of evangelism as a kind of ministry for which they are not prepared and therefore fail to see any opportunity for themselves. The methods are many and varied, but the important thing is that those who lead in the work of the church give themselves to the task of awakening interest. This condition which prevails must be changed, it can be changed, and every church should definitely purpose to change it.

A COMMITTEE ON EVANGELISM

This implies that in every local church there should be a committee, commission, or board whose definite responsibility it is to promote the spirit and the work of evangelism in the local church. The mention of a committee immediately raises the question of added machinery in the local church. Many pastors and leaders are feeling that there are too many committees now, and are crying for unification and reduction of machinery. This urge has its ground and deserves careful study. Such a full examination of the question cannot be made here. It should however be remembered that whether the machinery be multiplied or simplified, the organization should provide for the essential things. It would be a fatal mistake if merely for the sake of lesser organization, the most important thing should be neglected. If the world is today waiting for a new empowering of the spirit, if the church is the agency through which the spiritual empowering is to come, and if evangelism is the release of such a power then surely the local church should have room for a group of consecrated people who shall give themselves to the study and promotion of this work. There are boards of trustees to look after the church property, there are boards of stewards and deacons to look after the finances, why not a committee to think primarily in terms of the spiritual. Such a committee should be carefully selected and the pastor should always be the leader. Its size is largely determined by the size of the congregation and the field to be entered. It should be a representative committee including the various church agencies and the various age groups, but composed of people who know God and have an appreciation of the spiritual. Unless the members of the committee are really spiritually minded people, they cannot direct a spiritual ministry.

There are several things which such a committee can do.

~~First~~, it can carefully study the whole field of evangelism and evangelistic activity, and secure the best helps for the church. One of the greatest weaknesses in the whole evangelistic program is the fact that so little thought is given to it. It is often stated with considerable emphasis that the supreme task of the church is evangelism, but what does that mean? For many people it means very little. Such a committee can make this mean more for the whole congregation through a careful study of the field. There are many helps available today which are not used. This committee can make available these helps.

~~Second,~~ it can also plan definitely the evangelistic efforts of the church. Often these efforts lack appeal and power because they are not properly built into the program of the church. It is always dangerous to try and force an evangelistic effort unless there has been careful preparation. This applies to the revival efforts. Many revivals would be more successful if better preparation had been made. But it applies also to the continuous efforts in evangelism. In a previous chapter we have stressed the fact that evangelism must become more distinctly an all-year-round activity, but that will require definite leadership and planning. Such a committee can do that.

~~Third~~, it can also keep the thought of evangelism constantly before the congregation through announcements in the local church papers or bulletins, through suggestions presented to the various organizations, through placards, posters, through the presentation of facts and figures, through discussions in prayer meetings, women's meetings, young people's associations and men's gatherings, and especially through personal example. It should not be the thought that this committee does the work of evangelism for the congregation, but it should be expected that the committee leads out in precept and example. Very little will be accomplished unless the members of the committee will promote the work through personal example. That was Jesus' way. He did not do the work himself, but he called men to himself and in his own ministry gave them an example.

~~Fourth~~, it can also supervise the various efforts put forth. This should not be done in a spirit of criticism or commandeering authority but in the spirit of co-operation. Such supervision is becoming increasingly necessary because more methods must be used. Such a committee should be a kind of clearing house through which these various methods may be unified and properly related. It is becoming increasingly clear that religious education must be given a much larger place in the work of evangelism than has been done hitherto, but this does not mean that the revival and personal evangelism are no longer useful. To carry on these different methods such a committee is greatly needed.

~~Fifth~~, it should also help to make the reception into church membership most meaningful. The methods of public reception vary somewhat in the different denominations, but only too often public reception is hurried and formal. Such a committee should study how to make the initiation into the church most meaningful for the individual. Some churches are finding the commitment of new members to definite service activities a most helpful way in making church membership more meaningful. The committee on evangelism can render a twofold service in this connection. It can assist in registering such commitments and it can also assist in encouraging such new members to be faithful in the service chosen.

Sixth, it can also help to build a Christian comradeship for those who have entered the Christian life. Too often in the past the work of evangelism has been thought completed when the individual became a Christian and united with the church. The latter has not even always been stressed. But evangelism must be more than initiation. It means a life of saving fellowship. Many new converts have few contacts with the church, and unless there is established some comradeship they are in great danger of being lost. Such a comradeship should include first of all an opportunity to study and discuss the meaning, challenge and opportunity of Christian living in fellowship with others. This is too greatly neglected. It should also include the establishment of relationships of friendship and fellowships. No person should be allowed to remain without some definite comradeship. If this is genuine and Christian it will do much to encourage and strengthen the new convert in the way of Christian living.

Seventh, it should also provide for the re-emphasis of the decisions made by new converts through definite recognitions. It would be a great encouragement if a record were kept by the committee of the date of conversion and admittance into the church of each new member, and then at the annual church meeting or at some other time have a special recognition service through which those who have accepted Christ have another opportunity to reaffirm their decision and make public confession. Such a service has great value, for the oftener one reaffirms his relationship to Jesus publicly the more firmly the purpose to live the Christian life is fixed. The committee could also remember the time of decision through an appropriate letter of congratulation and encouragement. Such a message has great spiritual worth.

~~Eighth~~, it should also give careful attention to the building of an adequate program of evangelism which should be constantly enlarging and advancing. Such a program should be used as a guide and a challenge in the work of evangelism. It will never be completed but ever in the process of making and enlargement.

~~Ninth~~, it should also give diligence to encourage and promote those efforts through which the spiritual resources are released without which there can be no effective evangelism. Prayer, testimony, personal consecration, cleansing, and empowering through the Holy Spirit are the basic activities through which evangelism is made possible. Such a committee could do much to strengthen the efforts through which these are released.

~~Tenth~~, it should be a source of encouragement and help to the pastor. Such a committee does not take from the pastor his rightful leadership in things spiritual. That must ever remain with him. But the committee will be his counselors, his helpers and his strong right arm.

A PROGRAM OF EVANGELISM

Every local congregation should also seek to express its evangelistic ideals and purposes in terms of a definite program of evangelism. There are some people who fear a program will be a handicap to the Spirit, but that fear is based upon a wrong premise. It implies that God can do his best work when people think least and prepare least; and that the Spirit is more free in a state of confusion than in a state of order. This is contrary to the teaching of the Scriptures and Christian Experience for God repeatedly urges preparation and calls men to think. A program does not mean that people sit down and plan their work and then try to force God to carry out their plans. It rather means that people try to interpret the leadership of the Holy Spirit in terms of a definite program of work. God is as much in the making of the program as he is in its execution. When we see a program in that light we can see that it is an essential of efficient service.

A program is a formulated plan of procedure. Its purpose is to concentrate attention, unify purpose, direct the endeavor, and release energy. Such a program is needed:

First, to understand one's own task. Not until one translates his task into the terms of a program can he really understand what such a task implies.

Second, to interpret one's task to others. Sometimes people wonder why others are not more interested in their endeavors and why there are so few who are ready to co-operate with them, but fail to note the fact that they have never clearly set forth their purpose. Hesitancy to co-operate is ofttimes largely due to lack of understanding. Without understanding there is no vital interest. The lack of interpreting the task in terms of a program makes the effort lacking in meaning and challenge.

~~Third,~~ to mark progress. Without a program there may be much activity, but little progress. People are in danger of simply moving in a circle and not knowing it. They may be very busy and spend much time, but make no progress. They need to translate their purpose and activity into a program by which they can measure their own efficiency and come to understand the challenge of the larger endeavor.

~~Fourth,~~ to guard against waste of both time and energy. A program is an outline of a task which will enable one to make the most out of every moment of time. It makes possible continuity and progress in the work. Without a program it is difficult to get proper perspective and relationships. A program will also help to carry on proper follow-up work

~~Fifth~~, to call forth latent resources. A program is a challenge to more potential living. Often people fail to draw upon their full resources because they fail to see the task in its greatness and completeness. Many individuals and groups halt in their effort and fail to call forth the unused powers simply because they have no program of work. Often people thought they were doing all in their power, but when they were led to see the larger task they were suddenly aware of resources never dreamed of. Such a calling out of resources is greatly needed in our day. Many lives are far below par; many churches are not using their strength, a program is needed to call forth the latent powers.

~~The value of a program of evangelism is further seen in the fact that it gives definiteness to the task.~~ Every local church should definitely assume its share of the work of evangelism. There is great indefiniteness with reference to this responsibility and privilege. Many churches accept as a matter of fact the truth that evangelism should be their work, but when it comes to the question what is implied in this task, there is indefiniteness and uncertainty. Just what the share of each church is cannot be set forth by any general statements but must be determined by a careful survey of the church and community. The facts must be secured. Procedure must be built upon these facts. For one church the definite and most pressing share in the work of evangelism may be the building of a church program which will interest the inactive membership of the church, and call forth larger participation in the regular work of the church. For another church the immediate task may be that of deepening the spiritual life of the membership of the church. For another, it may be the task of furnishing equipment for more efficient work through an enlarged or new building, and other service agencies. For another church it may be the task of making a special outreach to win the lost for Christ and the church. For another, it may be the task of sharing in some co-operative endeavor in the community for an evangelistic appeal, and the strengthening of the forces of righteousness. Nor will the task remain the same for each church. It will differ from time to time. New occasions must "teach new duties". Evangelism is a manifold activity. One weakness in evangelism is the fact that too many churches have limited this to one kind of activity. But this very fact makes the work indefinite. There must be a program of evangelism built upon these facts in the life of the church and the community, through which the thought and activity of the church may be focalized upon the most essential thing to be done at the particular time. It takes a program to give definiteness to the endeavor.

BUILDING A PROGRAM OF EVANGELISM

In building a program of evangelism for the local church it should be made to cover the activities of at least one year. There may be programs for a shorter time outlining the activities for some definite efforts but these should be parts of the larger program for the whole year. In perspective, the program of evangelism may cover even a larger period of time, but in definite outline it should provide for the activities of the year. Just how such a program for a year should be determined must be left to the local church, but in general the year of evangelistic activities seems most logically to begin with the opening of the work in the late summer or early fall months. Either September or October is a good time to begin such a program. This makes possible the opening of the evangelistic work with definite enlistments in the regular church organizations. The rally period has great value. Following the period of enlistment there should be a period of training in church activities and especially in evangelism. Teaching should always provide for opportunity of response and self expression, therefore this period should also be a time of spiritual harvesting and ingathering. This may be done through the revival meeting, visitation evangelism, decision days and periods, personal evangelism, and special efforts of church groups, but it should climax in the Christmas time with a definite and carefully prepared appeal for life giving. This period should mark the first harvest of the year. Following the holidays there should be another enlistment. Responsibility lists should be prepared and the members of the church encouraged in the use of prayer lists. This period opens suggestively and promisingly with the week of prayer, furnishing an excellent opportunity to stress the reality, the worth, and the need of prayer. Prayer objectives should be brought clearly before the whole church as added encouragement to enlist people in definite and intercessory prayer. In some churches the month of January is another time of special evangelistic meetings. During the lenten period, the life and ministry of Jesus should be carefully reviewed and studied and again the efforts of evangelism should climax at Easter time with another spiritual harvest and ingathering. More and more this period is being emphasized and used for evangelism by the churches and there is great value in the united efforts and the general emphasis. Various methods are used to make this period most helpful but the more essential thing is that definite evangelistic efforts be made to win others for Christ and the church. Following Easter there is often a tendency to slacken in the work. The largest ingatherings are often recorded at this time and people are in danger of feeling that the work is done and the next thing to be looked for is the summer relaxation. But this period should be carefully followed with an effort to incorporate all new converts into the church and bring them into fuller knowledge and co-operation with the church in her manifold activities. This should be a time of enlistment for service in the various Christian activities. This of course implies the empowering of the life through the Holy Spirit and suggests the larger use made of Pentecost. Fellowship with the risen Christ and empowering through the Holy Spirit should be the major emphasis during this period. If this is carefully done Pentecost should again be a time of spiritual harvest and ingathering. It was so in the early church, why should it not be so today? More should be made out of Pentecost.

The summer months bring a certain amount of distraction. The complexity, stress, and strain of modern life make periods of rest and relaxation more needful, and the multiplication of travel facilities make it posible for a much larger number of people to get out into God's great out-of-doors during the summer months. But the whole summer is not thus spent by any very large number of church people. While some of the regular activities cannot be carried on others can be added. In some rural sections special community services are held in some shady nook or some farm yard. In cities and towns out-door services are held in parks and open spaces. In many beautiful and restful camps the church is carrying on special services of teaching, training and appeal. These summer camps are offering splendid opportunities for evangelism. Several things of great value for evangelism are implied in these summer outings. First, they furnish added opportunities for contacts with others. New associations are formed, new fellowships are enjoyed, new friendships are made, all of which present opportunities for evangelism. Second, these excursions into God's great out-of-doors replenish physical strength and bring the inspiration of nature in all her wonder and beauty. Such a contact with the works of God should tend to stimulate new fellowship with the creator of all these things. Third, through these gatherings opportunities are provided to become better acquainted with the larger movements of the Kingdom. In this the religious summer camps are especially helpful. The gathering of believers from the various churches makes possible an interchange of thought and life which will greatly stimulate Christian living and activity. These summer months should not be barren months for evangelism. Those who are thinking in terms of the plans of evangelism in the local church should definitely plan to make these summer months times of review, rebuilding and enlargement of the program of evangelism for the local church. Such a program of evangelism covering the activity of the whole year and constantly enlarging and changing to meet the needs of the church is needed in every local church. Without it the work cannot be constructive and definite.

OBJECTIVES OF A PROGRAM OF EVANGELISM ✓

In the building of such a program of evangelism certain objectives should be kept definitely in mind.

~~First,~~ the program should be so planned that it will help interpret evangelism. Such a program will be a great aid in changing the thought of the people and creating interest in evangelism. It should therefore be clear, definite, not too complex. Not too many things should be attempted at one time, but the steps of work carefully outlined. It should indicate the objectives of evangelism and set forth methods and means through which these may be realized.

~~Second~~, the program should also provide for the spiritual enrichment of the believers. This is sometimes overlooked in the work of evangelism. The tendency to measure evangelism so largely by decisions and accessions has diverted this most important aspect of the work from its rightful place. The first question usually asked after an evangelistic effort is, How many decisions? How many accessions? Evangelists are judged by their ability to get decisions. Their salary is determined by the same standard. Decision is an important aspect of the work and cannot be too strongly urged, but it is not all of evangelism. Believers need to be instructed in the way of Christian living, to be led into the experience of the deeper things of God, to be guided and encouraged in the way of Christian service and to be empowered through the Holy Spirit. Sometimes the best revival is that which furnishes spiritual enrichment to the believer even though not many converts are won. Such a revival will be followed by an outreach which will bring in others. These two activities are not mutually exclusive but rather complementary, but the thought here stressed is that the spiritual enrichment of believers should be definitely included in the program of evangelism.

Third, a program should seek to enlist every Christian in the work of evangelism. It has already been pointed out that every talent has its worth in the work of evangelism. Many people have not yet learned how to relate their own talent to this work. Such a program should make room for every talent and thus greatly aid in the enlistment of all. To accomplish this much more thought must be given to evangelism than is usually given. If there is a strong committee of evangelism in the local church such a program can be worked out and such an enlistment effected.

Fourth, a program should also provide for the winning of others for Christ and the church. This is the supreme duty and privilege of the church. To her has been given the work of reconciliation. If the church fails in this, souls will not be won, and the world will not be brought under the Lordship of

Jesus. Nor can this be accomplished if the effort is haphazard and spasmodic. This is the task of the church, of the whole church and at all times. Such a program should keep this clearly before the thought of the church and outline the steps through which this may be accomplished.

Fifth, a program should attempt to define and plan to meet the responsibility of the church for the evangelization of the community. The church is not only responsible for those directly connected with the church, but also for those who are brought into relationship with the church through these contacts. The church has a responsibility toward the larger community. In formulating such a program it should be the earnest endeavor so to interpret that task that the local church will be led to respond to this community and help win the community for Christ. This fixing of responsibility is not always as easy as it might be especially where there are several churches and where the membership of the local church lives quite scattered. While it may not be possible to fix definite limits, in fact that is always impossible, yet it is possible to define the parish and fix the responsibility with some degree of certainty and accuracy. It should not be forgotten that as long as there are souls unsaved and conditions contrary to the mind of Christ the church has a responsibility and should give herself to earnest effort in the work of evangelism. Many churches would be greatly stimulated through such a definition of task in the communtiy.

Sixth, such a program should provide for enlistment, instruction, decision, commitment and service. The work of evangelism is not merely one expression but many expressions. This should be definitely recognized in the building of the program.

Seventh, a program should also provide for the characteristic responses of the different age groups and make possible a normal approach and reaction. This has already been touched upon in the suggestion that the committee on evangelism should include all the age groups and thus represent the thought in the different periods of life. It is clear therefore that to build such a program takes the best thought in the church and should have fullest consideration.

INSTRUCTION IN EVANGELISM

Good

Every local congregation should also provide for definite instruction in evangelism. It is a strange paradox that while evangelism is the most important work in the local church, less attention is given to instruction in evangelism than to any other phase of church work. This is due in part to the fact that there has been and still is in some churches a wrong conception of evangelism. It has been largely looked upon as a work which God will do for man, when through prayer and consecration, man fully yields to God. The regeneration of life is God's work. There is a place in the process beyond which man cannot go, but evangelism is also a cooperative endeavor. God cannot do this alone. He needs man. Man needs to learn how to cooperate with God. If it is important for one to know how to mix pigments to paint a picture, to know how to blend tones to produce harmonies, to know how to impart truth to teach a life, how much more important it is to know how to handle aright the word of life that man may be brought into a right relationship with God. If failure in any other activity of life is sad and disappointing, how much greater is the failure to properly guide a life in the way of Christ. Surely such instruction is basic.

Another reason why there has been less attention given to the work of instructing in evangelism is that until very recently helps for this work have been limited. Up to about the beginning of this century, almost everything written was limited to personal work. Some very helpful books were available for guidance in personal work, but the larger aspect of evangelism was not presented in such a form that it could be used. Many helpful books dealing more fully with the subject have in recent years been published and there is much more literature available. Yet text books dealing with the whole subject from the larger view are still not numerous. One of the difficulties in the effort to include evangelism in the curriculum of the leadership training courses is the lack of adequate text books. As long as this condition maintains the work of instruction is made difficult and must of necessity be rather limited.

There is, however, enough literature available today that in every local church there can be definite instruction in evangelism. Such instruction can be imparted through sermons. If the pastors will acquaint themselves with this larger conception of evangelism and then in a series of sermons present this conception to their congregations this will greatly aid in the work of instruction. This is possibly the only way in which a large number of church members can be taught the larger implication of evangelism. Every pastor has a great opportunity through the sermon. Such instruction can also be imparted through the organization of the church. The mid-week service is a good time for such teaching. The presentation in the midweek service offers a threefold opportunity. First, the subject can be presented in lecture form. Second, a discussion of the subject can be arranged for after such presentation furnishing each one an opportunity for questions and personal contributions from experience. Third, a period of prayer should follow such instruction and discussion, thus deepening the convictions made and the purposes formed.

Such instruction can also be imparted through a regular class in evangelism. This may be a class in an organization of the church, or it may be a class specially formed. Such a class should not meet for more than possibly ten or twelve weeks at one time. After some aspect of evangelism has been studied for ten or twelve hours it is best to give way for other activities and later have another class. If the class carries over a longer period there is danger that the interest lags and people become indifferent. The primary purpose of such instruction is not to impart facts only, but to create interest and call forth life responses. It will also greatly aid if such class instruction is definitely related to some phase of regular church work. A class in the study of the evangelism of youth should be related to the work which is being done for the youth of the church. A class for the study of evangelism as it relates to adult life should be related to the adult activities of the church. In this way the study will awaken greater interest and make posible larger opportunities of response. Such classes should not be exclusive in attendance and membership for there are often those who are interested in some phase of work in which they are not at present personally engaged. These should be given such opportunity to share in such study.

There is today a renewed emphasis upon the ministry of teaching in the church through the work of religious education. The whole ministry of teaching is being studied and perfected. This carries great promise of good for the strengthening of the work of the whole church. As before indicated evangelism is not yet as vitally related to this process as it should be. It would be a serious mistake if the church should build up such a vast program of education and neglect the most essential subject. Unless evangelism is included, such instruction will be incomplete and lacking in spiritual emphasis. Nor is it enough merely to mention the work of evangelism in connection with the other subjects considered. Evangelism is not merely a phase of church work but the heart of all such service. The work of evangelism needs to be lifted into its proper place. That means that courses in evangelism should be included in the curriculum of Leadership Training and the work of training in evangelism definitely stressed. It will be a great asset to the church if instruction in evangelism will be definitely included in her larger program of religious education.

THE GATHERING AND USE OF FACTS

Every local church should also keep the community survey up to date for definite information regarding the implications of the work of evangelism. Such a survey should include the church itself. There are often great opportunities within the church which are little used because little known. In some communities such a survey needs to be made every six months or oftener, in other communities once a year or once in two years is often enough. This largely depends upon the rapidity with which a community changes. But the survey should be kept up to date so accurately that the facts mean something and can be used in the work. Such a survey implies a record of all people in the organizations of the church who are not Christians. Also a record of all those directly touched through these organizations. Where one member in a family is enrolled in a church organization, there may be four or five others in that family not Christians but through this contact brought definitely into relationship with the church. Certain facts should be assembled regarding such prospects both in the church life and touched by it. These facts should be carefully gathered and classified and kept up to date. No church can really be efficient in the work of evangelism without such a record kept and kept up to date.

Such a survey should be more than a record of information. It should also be used as the basis for the distribution of responsibilities. With such facts at hand it becomes easy to make assignments of individuals and families for evangelistic purposes. The people discovered through the survey, should not merely be listed but enlisted. This can always best be done if the right people are found to make contacts with them. These assignments should be definitely made, but changed as conditions may require. If one family assumes responsibility for another family and after several visits feels that they are not able to make the most vital contacts another family should be chosen to befriend and win the family. Changes should not be made upon the first reaction, but only after careful attempt. There are several things which such a distribution of responsibility will accomplish. First, it will give a definite task to every one and open the way for people to use their normal talents for evangelistic work. Second, it will help the church definitely to assume responsibility for the unsaved. There are often too many people right near the church for whom no one is definitely responsible. A young man was slowly dying of tuberculosis. A Christian doctor asked a minister to go and visit the man. After the minister had spoken to him about Jesus and led him to Christ through prayer, the young man said, "You are the second person ever to speak to me about my relationship to Christ". Why should a young man be permitted to go out into eternity from a community in which there were two churches, and not be spoken to about his salvation? There is just one reason, no one was made responsible for him. The distribution of responsibility will greatly lessen such conditions. Third, it will make the concern for the unsaved a continuous one, as it should be. The greatest weakness in the appeal to some people is in the fact that the concern for their salvation seems to be spasmodic and not continuous, therefore its genuineness is questioned. When there is a kindly, loving, intelligent and continuous interest in the unsaved there are few who can ultimately resist such an appeal. Fourth, it will give to evangelism the proper proportion. Unless evangelism is thus inclusive it loses much of its meaning and challenge for both the church and the community. There is great need that the evangelistic outreach of the church be made more definite and inclusive through such a distribution of responsibility.

RELEASE OF WORKERS

Every local church should also seek definitely to release workers for the larger work of evangelism. One of the greatest inspirations for any congregation is to send forth young men into the ministry and young women into definite forms of Christian service. The work of evangelism lags in some local churches because they have never shared with others in sending forth some of their very best for world evangelism. If the evangelism in the congregation never challenges young people to yield themselves to definite Christian service it will not challenge the unsaved as fully as it should. The type of life in the local church will also in a large measure determine the religious ideals of those who go forth into the larger field of service. If the local church is evangelistically enthused young people will also carry with them such enthusiasm. Sometimes people ask why some young men who enter the ministry are not more evangelistic, but often these come from churches which lack evangelistic enthusiasm. There is constant need for workers in the larger field of the church. Where shall they come from? There is only one answer, they must come from the local church. How will they come? With the stamp of the religious thought and life of the local church deeply imprinted in character and life. In furnishing the world with workers and with the right kind of workers the local church has a great responsibility.

CHAPTER V

METHODS OF EVANGELISM

THE DISCOVERY AND USE OF GOOD METHODS

METHODS are established modes of procedure. They are processes through which definite results are to be achieved. Modes of procedure which do not aim at some definite results cannot, strictly speaking, be called methods, but are rather capricious, purposeless and wasteful expenditures of time and energy. The discovery and use of good methods are essentials of success. In his message of congratulation at the dedication of The Edison Institute of Technology, President Hoover not only recalled some of the outstanding achievements which stand to the credit of Mr. Thomas Edison, but made special mention of his contribution to human progress through the introduction and use of the laboratory method of research. Without this method applied science could not have reached its marvelous achievements. Any person who is indifferent to best methods proves himself inefficient in his work, and unworthy of the fullest confidence of him who has entrusted him with a definite responsibility.

While good methods are essential in all forms of activity, yet there are activities, which because of their very great importance, seem to call more urgently for good methods than others. Among these, the work of evangelism holds first place. Everyone who has any conception of the abiding worth of a human life must also have a great sense of responsibility in dealing with a human personality. This abiding worth is contingent upon the establishment of right relationships with God and man. The supreme adjustment is that which makes possible a life of saving fellowship with God. In this effort to lead the human personality into conscious saving fellowship with God, through Jesus Christ, the best methods are needed. If the chemist must be careful in the selection and use of his methods lest an error preclude the largest possible returns, how much more should he who would interpret Jesus Christ to men, and win their love for and their loyalty to him, guard well every step lest he should fail in this endeavor through a faulty method. If in any activity there should be an earnest seeking after best methods, it should be in the work of human redemption.

There is often a mistaken conception which tends to limit the search after best methods in the work of evangelism. The fact that the work of salvation is a Divine work is sometimes interpreted to mean that man has little or nothing to do but to surrender to God, that he has practically no part in salvation. In fact, there are those who denounce all human efforts as useless, if not wrong. Such people contend that methods interfere with the freedom of the Holy Spirit and should therefore be discouraged. While it is true that salvation is of God; that he alone can deliver from sin, it is also true that in his saving work God works with man. Unless man is willing to enter into cooperation with God, there is no salvation. Paul clearly set forth this fact when he wrote to the Philippians saying, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling", but immediately added, "It is God who worketh in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure".[1] The experience of salvation implies action and reaction. God's outreach must be met with a human response. Such a response implies an intelligent and wholehearted approach to God. Methods are not encumbrances of the Spirit, but rather added opportunities for the Spirit's incoming into life. God is not more free when man is least active; he is not more able to save when man is least thoughtful, he is not given the largest opportunity when there is disorder, for "God is not a God of confusion".[2] The more man thinks, the more he plans, and the more he seeks best methods, the more he opens the way for the incoming of God into the life of the individual and the social order. The basic significance of this for the work of evangelism is set forth by Paul when he says, "We are God's fellow-workers".[3] As such man is challenged to bring his best into such a life of comradeship. He should ever be a searcher after the best methods.

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[1] Phil. 2:12, 13.

✓ A word of caution should, however, be added. While man should seek after best methods, he should guard carefully against enslavement by a method. Methods are only means to an end, they should never be substituted for the end itself. There is always danger that interest shifts from the life to the method; that the life and the method are so confused that people think there can be no life unless it is expressed through some particular method, and that there is more concern for the method than the life. The history of evangelism discloses some great tragedies due to this confusion of life and method. Instead of appraising life, workers often spend much time contending for method. Instead of accepting as genuine the work of God in a life through the Holy Spirit, there is often the effort to mould that experience according to some accepted form, not infrequently resulting in the crushing of the life itself. Such confusion brings forth weakness and defeat in the work of evangelism.

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[2] 1 Cor. 14: 33.

[3] 1 Cor. 3: 9.

NO ONE METHOD SUFFICIENT TO MEET EVERY NEED

It should also be carefully noted that no one method is sufficient. It matters not how successful a method may work, it will not meet every case. There are certain basic elements which abide. There are basic laws which must be observed. There are basic relationships which must be established. There is life which must be saved. But no one method will suffice in every case. Back of the method is the personality. But the different personalities respond differently. Some are deeply emotional, others are not greatly moved by an emotional appeal. Some respond quickly, others react slowly. Some are strongly idealistic, others are more pragmatic. Some are greatly enmeshed in the environment, others are more independent and free in their action. Some have a long history of religious influences reinforcing their lives, others are deprived of such a heritage. Some are weighted down with cares, disappointments, sorrows and sins, others are walking in the sunlight of a day of seeming peace and prosperity. All need God; all need to be brought into a life of saving fellowship through Jesus Christ, but no one approach will win the interest of all. Deep down in every life there is a longing after the best life, the highest good. If this longing can adequately be called out there is little difficulty in getting the life to choose the highest good, but the contact is the important and decisive thing. Often Christian workers are bunglers instead of builders! What a tragedy when people become enslaved by the method and lose the ability to approach the life normally and with sympathetic interest. In the great field of evangelism enslavement by method is one of the greatest hindrances in the work today. In the past among Protestants the revival method has been largely used to the exclusion of almost every other method. It is often difficult to lead those who have been trained in this method to supplement this with other efforts. In more recent years religious education has come to be frequently mentioned as a fruitful method, but already there are those who are so enslaved by this method that they exclude all others. It seems most difficult to lead people to see that no one method of evangelism will suffice for every case. When once that truth will be clearly seen and fully accepted and put into practice, there will come a great advance in the work of evangelism.

ELICITING THE RESPONSE OF THE WILL

— [illegible] changes

Whatever the method used, the important thing is always the response of the will elicited from the personality. There is a phrase in commercial life which has great significance for evangelism. It is the phrase "Selling the man". There is a vast difference between "selling the man" and "selling the goods". It may be possible to sell goods without really calling forth a response of the will. Such a result may bring forth an immediate sale, but will fail to produce the largest and most abiding results. There is also danger that in evangelism superficial reactions are accepted for a response of the will and that adjustments are made, but the personality has not been led to a full commitment to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. Little of spiritual significance will result unless the full, free and wholehearted consent of the personality is secured. Many methods fail in this supreme accomplishment. People are won for the Church, for some belief, for some religious theory, but they are not really won for a life of saving fellowship with God through Jesus Christ. The result is such people lack enthusiasm, interest, and the spirit of cooperation, and contribute but little for the bringing in of the Kingdom. They are only nominal Christians, and have not been won for Christ and his cause.

Really ~~to win the personality, a method must have certain distinctive elements~~.

~~First~~, there must be an adequate teaching element. Many methods of evangelism fail in this. They are largely characterized by exhortation and lack of the teaching element. In many the teaching element is submerged because of lack of time and the urgency to call forth decisions. The most powerful persuasive element is a clear setting forth of the saving truth in Jesus Christ. More attention must be given to this teaching element in the work of evangelism.

~~Second~~, there must be an adequate reinforcement through social sanctions which appeal and give permanency. While religion grounds itself in the experience of the individual it has a definite group relationship. Group appeal has always been used in the work of evangelism, but often the group sanction used is incidental and lacks the element of permanency. The more the social sanction can be related to a group which has abiding character and influence, the stronger will be its appeal. In this particular the methods which include the regular Church organizations have a decided advantage. Through the Church and

Church organizations, such permanency is secured. Many of the methods of the past have been weakened because they have lacked close relationship to the Church as such, and have developed groups largely apart from the Church for their social sanctions, with the result that with the breaking up of the groups at the close of the evangelistic effort much of the social sanction also died out. Without such group sanction evangelism cannot succeed, but more attention should be given to the effort to relate this to groups which remain after the special appeal is ended.

~~Third,~~ there must be an adequate opportunity for conference and discussion. Any method which will fail in this will fail in its largest appeal. To the ancient people God said, through the prophet Isaiah, "~~Come now, and let us reason together~~".[4] He did not say come and accept without thought or consideration, but "Come reason". The claims of the Christian religion will stand closest examination. It is possible to give a reason for the faith. There is a reason why people should accept Jesus as Saviour and Lord, why then should there be hesitancy in inviting people to come and think and reason? Possibly one reason why decisions are often pressed without opportunity for mutual conference is that workers are not prepared for such conference. They have trained themselves in certain lines of apologetics, exhortations and appeal, but are unable to think in the larger terms of the claims of the Christian religion. At times there is little opportunity for discussion. The issue is pressed and the response elicited without a frank and full consideration of the whole question. It is, of course, true that people who have not come into the experience of salvation have only a limited understanding of spiritual things. It is also true that people who have entered the Christian life know the way and speak out of experience when they urge others to accept Christ, but as before indicated, the method must elicit the consent of the will, and this can only be done meaningfully if there is an opportunity to face the facts, weigh the evidence, and make a personal choice. No method of evangelism is really successful unless there is such an opportunity for mutual conference between the one leading another and the one being led to Christ.

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[4] Isaiah 1: 18.

Fourth, there must also be be an adequate opportunity for decision and life commitment. Consideration must issue in action. After the truth has been studied and the claims considered, there must be a life-response to the truth. While some methods fail to provide for conferences, other fail to elicit responses. The presentation must ever be with the view of leading the individual to a meaningful choice of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. Of the preaching of a certain pastor, one of the most loyal parishioners said, "He holds my interest every moment, but I never leave with a feeling that I ought to do something". There comes a time when interest must issue in conviction and decision, and when the life must be definitely adjusted to the new order. Unless the method makes room for a real passion and directs the interest to the choice of Jesus Christ, there is something wrong. No method which stops short of an adequate opportunity for decision and life commitment is trustworthy.

Fifth, there must also be the true objective. Many methods fail in this particular. Sometimes the method is admirable to lead people to follow a leader in the work of evangelism; sometimes it is adequate to lead people into the Church; sometimes it leads them to new relationships, but fails in the supreme accomplishment, that of leading people into a definite experience of reality and conscious fellowship with Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. Jesus ever remains the center of all of life. When any other person, or any institution takes the place of first interest there is spiritual confusion and evangelistic loss. It is here that many methods fall short. They do not serve to present Jesus in such a way that he is seen to be truly central, nor do they lead to conscious personal fellowship of man with God through faith in Jesus Christ. This failure in much of modern evangelism has brought evangelism into disrepute with many people. Too often evangelistic efforts are interpreted as attempts to build up some local Church, to make a better report to a Conference, to increase the finances, or even to give the pastor added recognition and popularity. All this weakens the effort and takes away the significance of the movement itself. There must ever be a deeper motive and a more worth-while appeal. Whatever the method, it must ever be clear that the supreme interest is in winning people from their ways of sin to walk in saving fellowship with God. Anything less than that will destroy the work of evangelism.

Sixth, there must also be an adequate opportunity for general participation. Perhaps the strongest indictment of most methods of evangelism is found in the fact that they elicit cooperation on the part of only a small number of people in the effort. Most people are merely on-lookers, some have even ceased to do that. The fault is not always with the method, yet many methods are so limited and specialized that general participation is difficult. Here again the method of evangelism which will make possible the largest use of the Church has the greatest advantage, while the method which seeks to promote evangelism as something superadded to the regular Church work presents the greatest weaknesses. Before the work of evangelism can really be made efficient in the church a larger participation must be secured. This must be faced in the choice and development of the methods of evangelism. The best method of evangelism is that which will make possible the largest and most worth-while distribution of responsibilities so that every Christian can find a truly worth-while and definite part in the effort, and feel that his or her part is vitally related to the work as a whole. There is great need today for a method which will elicit a larger response on the part of the believers. This must have more adequate consideration.

A SURVEY OF HISTORY OF EVANGELISTIC METHODS

A survey of the evangelistic activities of the Church down through the centuries discloses the fact that various methods have been used. There were times when the Church resorted to coercive measures and sought to compel people to accept the Christian Faith and unite with the Church, but generally the appeal was made to the heart and the reason. At times this effort to win others to the Faith was the supreme passion of the Church, while at other times other interests in the Christian movement have pushed evangelism to a secondary place. A method is largely determined by the personal appeal it has. Some of the methods used have in them a strong personal element, in others the personal is largely submerged. At times Christian instruction held a larger place in evangelism, at other times persuasion through argument and exhortation was the chief concern. Sometimes evangelism was the simple testimony of the soul's experience with God, at other times it was a more highly specialized and organized effort to win others to the Christian Faith. Since the Protestant Reformation, the differences in evangelistic methods have become more and more evident. Certain denominations have accepted one form, while others have accepted another. Sometimes these were brought into rather sharp contrast, causing misunderstanding and opposition. This tendency to limit a Denomination to one method has weakened the whole movement of evangelism, and today there is an earnest effort to lift this work out of such limitations. The development of the modern revival meeting has also brought with it many technicalities through which sometimes people were won for the movement, more than for the Christian way of living. In some instances there has also come a lowering of the standard of leadership, all of which has cast reflection upon this most sacred and important endeavor. In some spheres personal work has become mechanical, and therefore lost much of its great power. As a reaction against the coercions and extravagances of many of the evangelistic endeavors, some people and churches have turned against evangelism altogether and have become indifferent to the evangelistic urge. There is great need that a new order be brought forth out of this unwholesome confusion.

EVANGELISM THROUGH INSPIRATION AND THE APPEAL OF THE BEAUTIFUL

This has not generally been listed as a method, but has such evangelizing power and influence that it deserves such a place. Every church seeks to embody inspiration and the appeal of the beautiful in its program of worship and service. The former holds a far greater place in some churches than the latter, but, however submerged in practice, the ideal is usually present. Perhaps one weakness is found in the fact that too often these agencies are unrelated to the great work of evangelism. Sometimes inspiration is sought largely for the emotional thrill it brings, and beauty is included merely for the sake of aesthetic satisfaction. Both are vitally related to the work of human redemption, but both need to be kept in a proper relationship to the objective to be reached. Inspiration and the appeal of the beautiful are mighty forces for world redemption.

Inspiration and the appeal of the beautiful may be secured through architecture. A beautiful church building adequately furnished for worship has a great spiritualizing value. There is no particular merit in a plain, unadorned, and inadequately furnished Church building. Too often people are wholly satisfied if they build a meeting-house, a place large enough for a congregation to assemble, without any regard for the beautiful. Multitudes have been blessed through the services in such places, but there is a great difference between a meeting-house and a Church adequately furnished. Protestantism has lost much because in so many places its worship houses lacked the element of inspiration and the appeal of the beautiful. In many instances the lack of funds has been the chief difficulty in the way, but in many other instances the lack of ideal and appreciation have also been determining causes why churches are not more adequately furnished. In many places better and more beautiful churches could be erected and maintained if people only had more spiritual-mindedness.

If there were a more adequate conception of the power and influence of inspiration and the appeal of the beautiful, more attention would be given to the beauty of the House of God. There is, of course, also an extravagance possible along these lines. It is possible for a congregation to become so obsessed with the idea of a large and beautiful church building that the people plunge themselves into such heavy expenditures that they become self-centered and cease to give for the extension of the Kingdom of God in order to build up a more beautiful building or have a more complete worship service. Such unbalanced judgment does not help but rather hinders the cause because it is not an expression of interest in the Kingdom, but rather of a heightened selfishness. There is danger that in some places the work of Christ is made to suffer today because of the large expenditures for local projects. When the desire for inspiration and the appeal of the beautiful become paralyzing, it ceases to be a spiritual power, when it means such selfserving that the larger interests of the Kingdom are ruled out, it means spiritual loss. 2

Inspiration and appeal of the beautiful may also be secured through a cheery, winsome Christian atmosphere in the congregation. The worship service has much to do with the atmosphere. A worship service in which "the joy of the Lord" is the strength of the worshipers, creates a cheery atmosphere. Such a service must express sociability, enthusiasm, optimism, aggressive faith, and wholehearted confidence in God. This is possible only if there is adequate preparation of both heart and mind for the worship in the church. Too often the whole service is marked

true

by evident lack of preparation and the result is hesitation, uncertainty, lack of purpose and even evident discomfort and embarrassment. Such a service does not attract, it does not furnish inspiration, there is no appeal of the beautiful. The Psalmist desired to see "the beauty of Jehovah" in the house of Jehovah. This is a very common longing, but too often people are disappointed. A cheery atmosphere in the Church is a great evangelistic asset.

3 Inspiration and the appeal of the beautiful may also be secured through a clear setting forth of the saving grace in Christ in the lives of the believers. ~~The most persuasive presentation of the Gospel is ever in terms of living.~~ When that which is being taught is concretely lived, it has the most powerful appeal. Nothing can substitute for that. It is not so difficult to accept a religious theory as it is to live a religious life. When theory becomes divorced from life it soon ceases to interest and challenge. Here also there is found the greatest source of inspiration. What an influence a life has in which the truth in Christ finds expression in terms of living. Such a life has more power of inspiration than all theories. The more people a church has who live out the truth taught in the Church, the greater the evangelistic appeal of that Church. Here too, there is found the supreme challenge of the beautiful. There is much beauty in the world. Sometimes one is almost overwhelmed by the marvel and wonder of this, but the fullest expression is not in nature but in human personality. What an expression of beauty there is in a life filled with the spirit of Christ and living in the center of the will of God. Without such a disclosure of beauty the whole work of evangelism lags and fails.

Perhaps more attention needs to be given to this most important aspect of evangelism.

4. Inspiration and the appeal of the beautiful may also be secured through Christlike service. That which is in the experience of man must find opportunity for expression in human relationships. ~~The Christian way of living is the shared life.~~ The supreme motive of him who has come into saving fellowship with Christ is to give himself for others. The expression of this spirit in Christian service to others gives the Christian movement special power of appeal. It is this sharing of life with others which inspires and challenges. Whenever the Church is moved by a vital missionary outreach, she is evangelistically strong. That is why a ~~missionary spirit in a local church brings progress.~~ This missionary outreach implies a multitude of ministries, all of which are designed to release the human personality and enrich and Christianize human relationships. Whenever the church is active in human betterment and social redemption she inspires confidence, hope, courage, and turns people to Christ the source of life and power. This fact needs to be stressed more today. The pressure of local needs is tending to turn some congregations from a large and sacrificial service to selfserving. Such a movement will weaken the evangelistic outreach of the Church. The Church inspires when she serves. She brings men under the challenge of the beautiful when she gives herself freely and wholeheartedly to the work of human redemption.

5. Inspiration and the appeal of the beautiful may also be secured through hymnology and the use of religious art. Singing has always had a large place in the Christian movement. Christianity has called

forth song and is rightly called the singing religion. The urge to express Christian experience in melody has given rise to great hymns which have great evangelistic power. Along side of these hymns there have also been called forth gospel songs. Some of these have spiritualizing power, some are less valuable as spiritual aids. Commercial interest has flooded many churches with collections of songs of lesser spiritual value and tended to push the great hymns of the Church into the background. This is impoverishing many congregations and there is great need of better singing in many places. While gospel songs serve a purpose, yet the great hymns cannot be set aside without spiritual loss. Cheap song books are too expensive. To save a little money, congregations often reject the better hymn books, but they lose in inspiration and appeal. Every church should be furnished with good hymn books. People should also be encouraged to sing. With the introduction of special music into the churches there has been a gradual lessening in general participation on the part of the congregation. Sometimes the rendition of hymns is so technical that congregations cannot participate; sometimes people are so urgent to have special music that there remains little opportunity for congregational singing and sometimes there are so few books that people cannot sing. But there is a great loss spiritually when people cease to sing. The history of evangelism shows clearly that when gospel singing declines in the Church spirituality declines. The great hymns of the Church should be sung by the whole Church. Such singing inspires and challenges.

The Church has also used religious art for inspiration and appeal, but only in a limited way. In the earlier history of the Church religious art played a much larger part. In the great cathedrals built during the middle ages, religious pictures occupied a prominent place and religious art was at its best. In the Protestant churches less attention has been given to this than in the Catholic churches. In many modern churches pictures have been built into the windows, but it can hardly be said that these generally are expressions of the highest art. Sometimes they are anything but artistic. In more recent times there is a renewed interest in religious art. This is finding an increasingly large place in the program of religious education, and carries with it great power of inspiration. The influence of art upon character building is not as fully appreciated as it should be. It is not very generally recognized that human nature responds to the beautiful. There are great values in religious art for evangelism when rightly used. Every church should become familiar with the best helps in this field and embody religious art in its program.

Over against the advantages offered by this method of evangelism there should also be noted its limitations. Evangelism through inspiration and the appeal of the beautiful is limited when it comes to those who are not regular attendants upon divine worship or participants in the Church schools. Apart from the contact with those who live the Christian life and perhaps an occasional visit to the Church, such people fail to be touched vitally by this method. It is also limited in that it fails to provide adequate opportunity for decision and life commitment. The appeal is strong but often the inspiration fails to lead to definite action. Without such action there is no permanent gain. This method also lacks the needed educational element. Without training there is a lack of proper appreciation and the lack of appreciation tends to weaken the appeal. Through religious education there is introduced a larger element of training and the result is the strengthening of this method. This method also lacks the power of general enlistment. The number of those who really are guided to the higher things through inspiration and the appeal of the beautiful is usually not very large, therefore the method is limited. It also lacks the personal element. There is little room for the personal contact and little opportunity for personal conference. This is possibly one of the greatest limitations of this method. The method has its values, but its outreach is very limited.

EVANGELISM THROUGH LITERATURE

The use of literature as a promotional agency is generally recognized in commercial endeavors. Whenever an attempt is made to promote a new project one of the first efforts is to provide suitable literature as a help in such promotion. Large sums of money are expended annually for promotional literature. The Church has long since recognized this fact and also sought to promote the great work of evangelism through literature. Each denomination seeks to produce literature through which the work of evangelism may best be carried on in the denomination. This is sometimes done at a financial loss, but the expenditure is justfied on the basis of a spiritual service rendered. The vital relationship between such literature and the general evangelistic endeavors of the Church is not as clearly understood by many pastors and congregations as it should be, for often upon mere pretext other literature is substituted for that which the Church provides and the promotional work of the denomination is hindered. There is some literature which is of such a general character that it serves all denominations, but as long as the denomination serves as a separate promotional unit its own literature holds a vital place in such promotional work. Interdenominational and undenominational literature tends to weaken the specific work done by the several denominations when it supplants that of the denomination. Such literature may amplify, but should never supplant the literature of the denomination. More attention should be given to the circulation and use of denominational literature. Increasingly denominations are entering into co-operative endeavors. This is especially true in the work of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. Such cooperative efforts make it possible to issue literature cooperatively, which, while promoting the work in the denomination, brings the denominational activity into ever closer relationship with the whole Christian movement. This does not destroy but strengthens the denominational program of promotion. In all this work literature must hold a vital place.

Literature also furnishes the channel through which special announcements and appeals may be issued. To the membership of the Church this may be done in a limited sense through the denominational periodicals, but to the community it can often be done best through additional helps. Local news and appeals can best be presented through the local publications of the community and church bulletins. In many community newspapers churches are offered free space for announcement of services and service activities. This courtesy means much but is not always appreciated and sometimes passed by without use. Sometimes this favor is misused by the inclusion of announcements which exert a divisive influence in the community life and are therefore embarrassing to the editors of such papers. Whether free space is used or space bought in the community newspaper, the inclusion of news should always be with the thought of making an appeal to the community for the response to the spiritual life. Such announcements are always unifying and enriching. These brief statements of purpose and activity have a direct relationship to the spiritual thought and purpose of the community. They should be more than mere announcements of activities in a specific church. They should help to emphasize the spiritual appeal to the community, and should turn the thought of the people to the great head of the Church, Jesus Christ. Church bulletins and parish papers offer a further opportunity to bring the claims of Jesus Christ to the membership and constituency of a local church. Through these a more detailed report of the aims, ideals and activities of the Church can be set forth. Many homes are reached through such publications into which no other religious periodicals come, and if special attention is given to the editing of these agencies, a special service can be rendered to such homes. Through these the Church becomes known to the community and the service of the Church is multiplied. They have a powerful influence for evangelism. Personal letters also offer an opportunity to carry on the work of evangelism through the use of literature. Some pastors use this means to bring to the members and friends in a more personal way the special objectives of the Church. Cheer and comfort can be multiplied for the shut-ins and suffering ones through these personal messages. Often a word of timely warning or appeal can best be directed to some heart through a letter. The use of this form of literature must be guarded with great care, but there are spiritual possibilities often largely unused. A personal message at the right time may save a life from defeat and death.

Possibly the most familiar use of literature for evangelistic work is that of ~~tracts~~ and ~~special pamphlets~~. This has long since been recognized as a fruitful method. Many a life has been led to Christ through a tract. Many people have found added opportunity in evangelism through the distribution of tracts. That there is great value in this no one who knows the facts will deny. There are difficulties, however, which often make this very unsatisfactory. There is a lack of really suitable tracts. Many tracts are written from a point of view which is narrow and biased and fail to make an adequate appeal. Many are distinctly marked by religious idiosyncrasies and unbalanced thinking. Many are written from the viewpoint of dogmatism and lack a sympathetic approach to life. Many are too denunciatory in spirit rather than instructive and appealing. Often, too, the use of tracts is brought into disrepute by the attitude of those who distribute them. Not infrequently such people assume a superior attitude which is repelling rather than winning, and the whole cause is injured. Whenever any service rendered becomes stereotyped and perfunctory it loses its spiritual worth and ceases to be a spiritualizing influence. Tracts have their place in the work of evangelism, but there is great need of a better type of tracts and a more Christian attitude in their use.

The greatest opportunity for the use of literature in the work of evangelism lies no doubt in the teaching materials used by the Church in her work of Christian education. Such material is rapidly being multiplied and greatly increased in technique and adaptability. More and more the teaching materials are adapted to the needs of the various age groups, the approach made from the viewpoint of interest, and the life led out into a search after the larger good. The project method is more and more being used and thus new interest elicited and a new way discovered to relate all teaching to the higher life. A proper use of this method should mean a great spiritualizing influence. One of the difficulties which weakens such use of teaching materials for evangelism lies in the fact that some who use this have not learned to relate this to evangelism. There is often a sharp distinction between education and evangelism. This should be removed and the two ministries placed into their proper order. Why teach the Christian principle if the one taught is not to be led to a personal commitment to Jesus Christ? Why permit the impression made through the presentation of the truth to die out without issuing in definite action? Why not assist those whom we teach to a personal acceptance of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord? That is the objective of all Christian instruction. If those who serve in the use of these materials could see this and use their opportunity carefully, the work of evangelism would make much more progress. That an increasing number of teachers are using this opportunity to the full is most heartening and hope-inspiring. May many others also give themselves to this great work! Sometimes also teaching materials are produced which are so lacking in true content that there is little of spiritual appeal. There seems to be a hesitancy on the part of some producers to include those basic truths which beget Christian conviction and lead to a life-commitment to Jesus Christ. In some of these materials the great source-book of religion, the Bible, is given altogether too secondary a place. This tends to weaken the evangelistic appeal and take away the real value of the teaching materials. There is need of more constructive building of lesson material. A spiritually depleted literature will never produce a strong, virile Christianity. It should always be remembered that such lesson material is basic for the development of a life in the experience of saving fellowship with Jesus Christ.

Literature offers some definite advantages for the work of evangelism. It is a method which many can use. It is not difficult to give a tract, to write a letter, and to distribute church announcements, yet if done in the right spirit this has great spiritualizing value—making possible for all to have a part in the interpretation of the teaching material of the Church. Parents can do that in the home circle, teachers can do that in the class room, friends can do this when they meet friends, and leaders of groups can do this in their contacts. All this has great evangelistic significance. The truth presented through literature often has an abiding quality which the spoken word does not have. The tract may be laid aside but when picked up again its truth will stand forth as ever before. Often literature offers the best way to engage a person in a conversation about some great truth. At times the best way to close a conversation is with a printed statement or appeal. Then, too, literature makes the evangelistic outreach much greater. Through the printed or written page one can reach others at a great distance. In this way the truth that saves can be spread abroad and many lives touched. The Church should give more attention to literature as an agency through which to win others to Christ and develop Christian character.

But there are some limitations to this method. There are many people who seem to be little interested in any kind of religious literature. It is becoming increasingly difficult to engage people in the reading of religious tracts and other helps. So many other interests seem to be crowding out these tracts and other helps. Literature also lacks the personal touch. Print seems to rob the appeal of the warmth of the personal interest and make it cold and formal. The method also fails to provide for an adequate follow-up system and thus impressions are often allowed to die out without crystallizing in definite action. Much of the literature deals with life from the viewpoint of reformation rather than formation. It fails to present an inclusive view of the Christian life. It is only one of the many agencies through which the saving truth is brought to man and made operative in the individual life and human society. Its power should be fully recognized but its limitation not overlooked.

EVANGELISM THROUGH PERSONAL WORK

Personal work holds a vital place in the work of bringing men and women to Christ. The great leaders in evangelism have all been personal workers. Whenever people show a personal interest in the unsaved through prayer, personal witnessing and personal solicitation, the appeal of the Gospel becomes winsome. Often the lack of personal interest and concern is one of the greatest hindrances in the work of evangelism. There have always been those who have gladly given themselves to personal work, but the number has never been large. Many good people seemingly have never felt themselves called to this type of service. This may be due to the fact that this service has often taken on a technicality which made most people feel excluded. It may also be due to the fact that many people fail to live in as vital fellowship with their Master as they should and therefore fail to be urged on to specific service. Great good has been accomplished through personal work but as a method of evangelism, while highly prized by the Church, it has never enlisted a large number of believers.

Personal work has great value for the one who engages in it. People who prayerfully and purposefully seek after the lost to win them to Christ have their own spirits refreshed and their lives enriched. There is no other service which has such great reward for the workers as that of going out to win others for Christ. Those who have never experienced this joy are yet strangers to one of the most satisfying experiences in the life of saving fellowship with Christ. But personal work also enlarges the evangelizing effort of the Church. There is an outreach possible through personal work which would never be possible through any other activity. In fact, it is the only way through which a church can really become evangelistically efficient. If each member of the church touches some other life with an evangelistic appeal, the contact of the church reaches far and wide into the community and the nation. Who can measure the influence of such an outreach? Through personal work the most effective appeal can be made to the unsaved. Personal interest is the most effective way to issue an appeal. There may be other ways which have great value but nothing can equal the personal touch. Such contacts provide also for the largest possible consideration of personal problems and the impartation of instruction concerning the way of life. Quietly, alone with a sympathetic approach the worker can be most helpful to the one to be led to Christ. Such an evangelistic effort has great value.

What makes personal work less effective is the fact that it is often haphazard and accidental, failing systematically to cover the whole field. At times, as during a revival meeting, it is more general, but at other times it lacks orderliness and comprehensiveness. Many people are overlooked by those who engage in this effort. This method also has enlisted only a small number of believers. This is no doubt one reason why the field is so inadequately covered. Yet the method lacks universality in outreach. There is no comprehensive survey of the field. Personal work is also limited in the method itself. Too often people are grouped rather arbitrarily according to some specific type of wrong doing. The first effort of the personal worker is usually that of classifying the people to be won into some general class. Thus people are listed as "backsliders", "unbelievers", "doubters", etc. But no person fits wholly into one class. Nor can every one in the same class be dealt with alike. Each individual responds differently and personal work loses its essential character and challenge when the individual is too completely submerged in the group. Sometimes personal work is also too largely limited to the securing of a decision and the initial steps into the Christian life, neglecting almost wholly the development of the new life in Christ. Worthy and fundamental as the beginning is, unless there is progress and development these first steps lose their significance. True evangelism must reach farther than the beginning of the Christian life. Many people have begun well, but because there was no adequate culture in Christian living they soon became indifferent and failed to develop virile and useful Christian lives. It is not true that if a person is truly initiated into the Christian life he will necessarily continue in the way of Christian living. It is just as necessary to furnish adequate means for spiritual growth as it is to furnish adequate opportunity for entrance into the Christian life. Personal work as a method of evangelism is often too greatly limited in the work of Christian culture. Sometimes personal work becomes mechanical and stereotyped. Not infrequently there is an air of professionalism and a lack of warmth and genuine Christian interest. This always lessens its appeal and power. Whenever the solicitation of a heart filled with the love of Christ is exchanged for a professional service the Gospel message ceases to appeal and the work lags.

People should be encouraged to engage in personal work; however, at the very best, this method cannot express the full content of evangelism. It has been and still is a means of blessing, and should not be neglected. The limitations mentioned above can be removed if more thought will be given to this work. There is a large field for personal work, but the challenge of evangelism calls for a more comprehensive method.

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CHAPTER VI

METHODS OF EVANGELISM (*Continued*)

EVANGELISM THROUGH THE REVIVAL MEETING

THERE are times of heightened interest and intensified activity in all religious movements. Times when new appraisals of the religious faith are made, new loyalties called forth, and times when special efforts are made to win others for religious thought and conduct. Such times are usually marked as a period of revival and enlargement. In character, in scope, in intensity and in results, such periods vary greatly. Sometimes as in the Old Testament history a prophet of righteousness calls the people to a new moral aggressive; sometimes as during the period of the Reformation a new emancipation of the religious spirit is achieved through the vision and heroism of some great leader; sometimes, as during the Great Awakening, which swept through the American Colonies the first part of the eighteenth century, there is a general under-current of religious interest and inquiry expressing itself in a quiet, earnest and wholehearted search after God; sometimes, as during the revival of 1857-1858, a spiritual movement sweeps through a nation and through nations reviving the Church, adding many to the number who are being saved and releasing mighty forces for the establishment of righteousness and justice in human relationships; sometimes, as in the great revival efforts, mighty mass movements are called forth resulting in large numbers being added to the Church, while sometimes smaller groups, as is often the case in the local congregation, are brought under an added challenge of sacrificial living and wholehearted loyalty to God. Such experiences have great value. Without such times of unified thought and intensified purpose, any religious movement suffers great loss.

THE REVIVAL IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

In Protestant Christianity the revival meeting has found a large place as a method for spiritual renewal and evangelistic outreach. The revival meeting has not found universal acceptance, for some of the larger denominations have never adopted this method of evangelism. Not all congregations in the denominations which have accepted the revival have used this method. Yet during the past one hundred years the Revival was more generally used than any other method of evangelism in the Protestant Churches, in America, and the revival meeting is today possibly the best known of all the methods of evangelism. While this also varies in form, yet in general the revival meeting is a series of daily services conducted by a church or a group of churches for the purpose of requickening the life of believers, reclaiming the indifferent and backsliders, and winning others for Christ and the Church. As before indicated, there were revival periods in Old Testament times, and all down through the Christian centuries, yet the revival meeting as best known today is of rather more recent origin. It is largely a contribution made to the Christian movement by American Christianity and has been a large factor in the development of American Christianity. During the latter part of the nineteenth century and the first years of the twentieth century, the revival meeting was lifted into special prominence through great mass movements under the leadership of special evangelists. While this method is still very generally used, in many instances it no longer has the same appeal nor does it furnish the same results as formerly. There is a rather marked turning away from this in search after a more fruitful method.

BENEFITS THROUGH THE REVIVAL MEETINGS

It would be impossible to record all the benefits which have come through this effort. During the past the revival has been a most fruitful method. Many struggling churches have received new life and new hope through a revival meeting. The added increment of spiritual interest and the increase of membership resulting from such an effort, have often put churches upon a new basis of existence. Many churches could not have survived but for the help furnished through the revival. This method has also provided added opportunity and incitement for personal work, resulting in definite efforts to win others for Christ and the Church. Nor could one study the history of the revival without noting that in many places this has furnished almost the only opportunity for Christian cooperation both in the local church and in the community. Such added incitement to think and act cooperatively has been of great value for the spiritual development of the community. The revival has also had a special community appeal. In some instances the revival meeting furnished an opportunity for the community to meet in social fellowship. Many who attended the revival meeting were attracted largely by the social contacts furnished. This, too, has had its value. Such an assembly offered a great opportunity for the presentation of the truth in Christ both as an experience in the life and a standard of conduct in man's related life. Through these efforts many communities received a new uplift. Individuals were changed, the community life was greatly enriched through ideals and moral power, evils were banished, and new forces of righteousness set into motion. The revival not only exerted a far-reaching influence in many communities, but has had a large part in the development of the moral and spiritual life of the nation. A fair evaluation of this method discloses the fact that this evangelistic effort has served in a large way to build the higher life in the nation.

Yet when full credit is given to the revival as an evangelistic factor, it still remains true that there are certain limitations in this method. The revival meeting at best is too limited in time. Usually it continues only a few weeks. There may be a very intense effort to evangelize others during the revival, but this is too often limited to the few weeks of special effort. The revival often fails to provide adequately for the conservation of the spiritual increment gained during the special effort. It often leaves those who have enlisted in definite services without any special work outlined, those who have made decisions without the much needed spiritual guidance and watch care, those who were aroused but did not decide for Christ without further definite appeal and solicitation, and those who have co-operated, tired and exhausted. The stress of mass decision often leads to indefiniteness of individual experience resulting in the fading out of impressions, the waning of religious enthusiasm, the lessening of religious fixedness in purpose and the loss of the spiritual gains made during the revival.

HOW TO STRENGTHEN THE REVIVAL EFFORT

There are, however, great values in the revival. The limitations can be removed, the weak places can be strengthened, and the greater good realized if this effort will again be recaptured for the Church and vitally related to the program of the Church. If this is to be done, several things must be observed.

(1) The revival effort should be carefully and constructively built into the program of the local church. It should be a part of that program and so vitally related to each part that correlation and co-operation is possible. If this is done there will be no superadding to the regular work, but rather a strengthening of every phase of the work.

(2) Adequate preparation should be made for the revival meeting, through contacts, friendships, relationships, Bible study, prayer, training, and well prepared publicity. If the revival is properly embodied in the program of the church such preparations can be made more easily and with greater efficiency. The regular work will be the very best preparation for the intensified effort.

(3) In the revival effort the regular church organizations should be more fully used. These organizations have been included in the working arrangement of the Church with much thought and care and are the most normal and efficient working units through which the Church can express her purpose and passion. They provide the best methods of approach; they enlist the largest numbers of workers; they touch the greatest number of unsaved people; they have the best group sanctions, and are best fitted to conserve the spiritual gains made during the revival.

(4) The revival effort should provide for clear, sane and definite religious teaching. The truth should be made so prominent that it will persuade. Too often the revival has been characterized by all kinds of sensational appeals and psychological tricks. This sometimes brings immediate results, but leaves an unwholesome effect. When the truth wins there is wholehearted response, when other urgencies are substituted for the truth, the response lacks meaning and power. If the revival is vitally related to the program of the Church, the whole teaching power of the Church can be used with great effect. Why should this not be used?

(5) The revival effort should provide for a clear, distinct, but varied appeal. All catch methods should be guarded against. Such an effort should also provide opportunity for advance steps in the Christian life, as well as decisions for Christ. People who express a desire to take advance ground in Christian living should not be embarrassed by being listed as backsliders and then reported as new converts. Advance in Christian living should not be limited to one experience or mode of expression. People should be urged to make adjustment to the will of God in terms which are meaningful and lead to vitality in experiences. The claims of Christ should be presented with such clearness, definiteness and urgency that people will find their wills in a growing accord with the will of God, and their lives giving increasing expression to the purposes of God. Often the appeal is so limited that people who feel unable to make the response asked for find little or nothing which calls them to nobler living and more Christlike serving.

(6) The revival effort should be so planned that opportunity is furnished to deal frankly and individu-

ally with each person. There is power in mass appeal, and persuasion in mass movements, but unless opportunity for personal discussion of individual problems is provided the movement tends to become superficial and meaningless. The personal element must always be carefully guarded.

(7) The revival effort should combine visitation and preaching. There are various ways in which this can be done. Each local situation demands special consideration and arrangement, but the two appeals must ever be held in their proper relationship. There are some people who depend almost wholly upon the public appeal and therefore resort to the use of methods in dealing with people which they would not consent to elsewhere. This usually leads to unwholesome reactions, sometimes to religious tragedies. If visitation and the public appeal are properly related such extravagances can be avoided and the appeal made with saneness and effectiveness.

(8) The revival effort should always be under the spiritual supervision and leadership of the pastor. The pastor may find it necessary to secure help at times, but he should never relinquish the spiritual leadership of the church. He more than anyone else knows the needs of the congregation; he knows the problems of his people; he knows the spiritual condition, and he knows how best to approach each life. A stranger may have better knowledge of religious technique and of evangelistic methods, but these should not be used at random, but rather under the direction of the pastor. There has often been great harm done because the pastor has turned over the spiritual leadership of his people to one who did not know the field. There is too much at stake to make such a surrender of spiritual leadership.

(9) The revival effort should always be marked by a true spiritual ministry. Lesser motives should have no place in this effort. It should never be reduced to a membership-getting campaign. The primary purpose of the revival is to lead people to a personal surrender to Jesus Christ and an ever increasing adjustment to his will and purpose. The interest should ever be genuine and the effort to seek the best for all concerned. The chief objective should be the release of spiritual life and power. If this is done the results will be worth while and abiding.

(10) The revival effort should be Christ-centered. He should be the supreme personality around whom all others cluster. In some revival efforts in the past great harm has resulted from the centrality of some lesser personality. Sometimes it was an evangelist, sometimes a singer, sometimes some other worker. When the effort ceased and this particular personality stepped out of the foreground, there was distraction and loss. It matters not how useful another person may be in such an effort, Jesus Christ must ever hold the place of centrality. This should also be true in the presentation of the truth. The truth in Christ is saving truth. The more Christ is made the heart of the Christian message the more winsome and saving such truth. The revival should always be the means for the presentation of Christ.

If the revival will be thus built into the program of the Church there will not only be a place for this effort, but it will prove to be a means of great spiritual ingathering and upbuilding. In all forms of activity there are times when the normal activity needs to be heightened through special efforts. Life does not flow at an even tide. There are high tides and low tides. Great commercial agencies call in their helpers at times for added information, inspiration, and challenge. Educational leaders provide times for study and conference, why should not the Church plan for times of refurnishing and requickening? Unless the Church provides such times of intensified emphasis, the normal life will lag and lose interest. The form of the revival may differ, but the principle strikes deeply into the needs of the Church.

EVANGELISM THROUGH PERSONAL VISITATION

In more recent times personal and visitation evangelism have been finding an increasing acceptance in many churches. These are not exactly synonymous, but complement each other so fully that we can best study them together. Personal evangelism, as the term suggests, implies two elements. First, the dealing with the individual personally, and not as a member of a group. In personal evangelism the effort is primarily to meet the individual and to call forth that special reaction each individual is capable of making, and needs to make, for spiritual life and conduct. In this way the truth can be most clearly and meaningfully applied to the needs of the life. This is recognized more and more in all efforts which deal with human betterment. The teacher who only thinks in terms of the class fails, the salesman who sees only the group does not make the best sales, the evangelist who sees only the congregation misses the greatest opportunity. It is the personal contact which wins. But this is not only one personal contact, but rather a series of contacts. Personal evangelism seeks to bring the truth of Christ normally and continuously to the life, thus preparing the life for a meaningful decision and a steady growth in the Christian life. Evangelism has too often been limited to one act. It is more than one act, it is rather a continuous solicitude and self-giving for the good of others. Such an interest wins and brings forth spiritual returns.

Second, it is marked by personal participation. It means that all believers are to be interested and active in the work of winning others for Christ and the Church. The parents in the home, the teachers in the school, the business men in the office and store, the laborer in the shop, the travelers on the train, the Christians everywhere have opportunities to present Jesus Christ to men and win them to the Christian life. This means that evangelism must be lifted out of the sphere of a specialty and made the definite effort of all believers. This is the Biblical conception and the only way in which the Christian movement can come to its greatest power in outreach and spiritual conquest. It is also the only way through which the Christian can come to real joy and satisfaction in Christian living. Through personal evangelism the regular organizations of the Church can be made the greatest evangelistic agencies. This method should find fullest acceptance by every believer.

PLAN FOR PERSONAL VISITATIONS

Every personal effort is strengthened when properly related to a definite purpose. Such relationship implies a careful survey of the field and a definite organization for the fullest occupation of that field. This has led to the working out of definite programs of visitation and appeal. It has especially come to be a favorite method for co-operative evangelism. Each denomination can co-operate with the general movement and yet work out the details in its own group as will best meet the needs there. Of course this effort can easily deteriorate into a mere effort to get members for the Church instead of leading people to Christ, but the fault lies not so much with the method as with those who are making the visitation. Churches in which there is a low tide of spirituality sometimes rush into this work without adequate preparation, and the result is a superficial effort instead of a spiritualizing power. Personal visitation should never be made a time for argumentation, but an opportunity to witness for Christ. But people need to have definite experiences with Christ if they are to tell forth his saving truth. The greatest weakness in this effort lies in the lack of definite Christian experience. If the method fails it will fail at that point. It takes personal experience to be a witness, and there must be a witnessing to make personal visitation a spiritual force.

While personal visitation should be a continuous effort, there are advantages in specially outlined programs for personal visitation campaigns. Such programs should provide definite helps along these lines.

(1) There should be a time carefully selected and set apart for this work. Usually the time set apart for the visitation is rather brief, possibly a week or ten days, but this must be preceded by a period of careful preparation. Such preparation may cover six weeks or two months, or it may be a shorter time. However, time enough should be given to prepare both the field and the workers.

(2) While the whole congregation should be enlisted in the effort, for the specific task of home visitation, special workers should be selected for the special visitation. These should be selected because of spir-

itual fitness for this task. It is generally dangerous to depend upon volunteers, and far better to draft people definitely. Sometimes the hesitant are the most effective workers. After the workers have been chosen, they should be carefully instructed and trained for the work.

(3) A survey of the Church field should be made to gather the facts with which to build up a "constituency" or "responsibility" list. This may be done in various ways. It is not always necessary that every time a visitation is planned a definite community survey be made. Such a survey must, however, be made occasionally, but often the facts can be secured otherwise. The church field should be surveyed each year. This includes especially the organizations of the Church. These in a special sense are the field of greatest evangelistic opportunity for the Church. Through these the largest number of contacts are made. The facts concerning these opportunities should be definitely inquired into and embodied in the program of personal visitation. This will give comprehensiveness and definiteness to the effort.

(4) Preparation of the prospects should be made through prayer, well chosen announcements, and appeals. It is essential that this whole work root itself in prayer. In this the whole church can engage. Sometimes it is most helpful if the opportunities are presented to the church in a prayer service, but great care should be exercised in the publicity given to the names secured through the survey. It should always be remembered that these names imply a sacred trust, therefore dare not be handled carelessly. The members of the church should be urged and encouraged to use prayer lists. This gives definiteness to prayer and if done in the right spirit will result in great good.

The largest measure of success is always possible if those whom we seek to win are first made the object of definite prayer. When people really pray for others they will not be superficial in their work with others. But prayer should not only be for the preparation of those to be won for Christ, but also for those who are to carry on the work of visitation. The workers should definitely pray for guidance and strength. Visitors who go in the spirit of prayer will be a spiritual force. Preparation should also be made through church announcements and personal letters. These, if carefully used, will furnish a splendid introduction for the visitors. It is always easier to win people if they have already been approached in such a way that their interest was aroused. The saving truth of Christ, however, expresses itself through saved individuals, and these individuals are related to some group, the more these groups interpenetrate and serve the community, the greater the appeal to the unsaved. The thought and activity of the Church should therefore be shared with the community, not in a boastful way but in a modest, yet truthful, way. Such information will open the way to many hearts and homes. Sometimes people want to reap without sowing. It takes careful preparation of the field for the largest ingathering.

(5) Assignments of prospects to the workers should also be made with care and definiteness. Such assignment should include the fullest possible information concerning the one to be interviewed. It should also be made with the fullest possible discrimination. Some workers are better fitted to meet some people than are others. It is generally best if the age groups are recognized as far as possible. Men can win men; women can win women, and young people

can win young people better than others. This cannot be laid down as a rigid rule, but is a principle well to keep in mind. Timid workers should be given the easier prospects to begin with rather than the more difficult cases. Much will depend upon the distribution of assignments in this work.

(6) The visitation should be made by teams of two. It is often most helpful if the workers can meet for a luncheon at the church and have an hour of fellowship and conference together before they start out. Every evening reports from the previous day can then be given and where special help is needed that can be furnished. It is also very helpful if those not engaged in the special visitation will meet for a service of prayer while the teams are out visiting. This enlarges the participation and reinforces the work. This part of the visitation is as important as that of the personal contact and appeal, for this work is not through might nor power but through the Spirit. Enlistment cards are of help to the workers in registering the decision of those won for Christ. Such cards should state definitely the decision and should be signed as evidence of purpose and experience. These should be cards which are suited for each decision. Those who decide for Christ should register such a decision, those who take an advance step in the Christian life should have an opportunity to register such decision, and those who are Christians but not members of the Church should indicate their willingness to unite with the Church. The cards should not be substituted for a personal act, but used to register such a personal act.

(7) There should be careful attention given to the conservation of the spiritual gains made during the visitation. All who have accepted Christ should

be led into fellowship with the Church as a public confession of their purpose, and an enlarged service program should be launched by the local church making possible a larger cooperation in the work of the Kingdom. The new interest and enthusiasm must be harnessed to a new task. It will not mean much for people to make spiritual decisions unless the new purpose will be embodied in definite forms of Christian thought and activity. Often this is neglected and much of the gain is lost. Every evangelistic appeal should be accompanied by a definite effort to enlarge the service activity of the Church. Such an effort will greatly strengthen the whole program of evangelism.

VISITATION A CONTINUOUS EFFORT

Such a definite period of personal visitation should not be interpreted as exhausting the responsibility for personal evangelism. There is always danger that people relax after a definite effort and think the task done. Evangelism is the duty of the Church all the time and everywhere. People who are Christians should be constantly seeking to exert an influence which will lead others to Christ. The weakness of the Church lies in the fact that so many members are indifferent to this the most important fact. People are lost not only during a revival or during a period of personal visitation, but they are lost if they are without Christ. Some will yield during special times of urgency and appeal, but others will yield during times of quiet normal Christian activity. The field is ever white unto harvest, and there should be reaping as well as sowing. Much loss is encountered because too often this reaping is neglected. Personal evangelism must never be so fully identified with such definite efforts of personal visitation that it becomes limited to times and seasons. It must rather be that constant, personal solicitation and appeal through word and example to win others to Christ in season and out of season.

Personal evangelism offers the greatest opportunity for the sharing of personal experience with others through testimony. In all evangelism there is a danger of neglecting personal experience. Too often the public address, the sermon, and the public invitation are almost wholly relied upon as the greatest persuasive forces for evangelism. These are great, but not the greatest. The most powerful agency is personal testimony. It is what God has wrought, and now does, in the life of the believer which has greatest power of compulsion. Christian testimony is not the reciting of some choice selection of literature, nor is it the statement of some Christian conviction, but it is preeminently a witness of the power of God experienced in the life.

In the past the public testimony, or class meeting, offered a large opportunity for the sharing of such experience. In many churches such a service has been displaced by other activities. This is a great loss. It is interesting that while the Church generally has turned from this expressional activity, most of the isms have taken this up and are thereby interesting many people in their movements. The Church cannot win if she fails to utilize the experiences of Christian people in her effort to evangelize the world. There should be reinstated in the Christian Church an opportunity for Christian people to share with others their Christian experiences. But the greatest opportunity lies in the field of personal evangelism. This field is peculiarly fruitful because such sharing can be done in the most normal and natural way. In the more intimate relationships and fellowships it is possible through personal evangelism to open the life to another in witness for Christ. It should, however, not be overlooked that while this is the most opportune way it is always the harder way. One must have a real experience to go to another in private and bear witness for Christ. It is not so difficult to give some expression in the group, where all engage in this expressional activity, but personal witnessing is more difficult. Personal evangelism offers great opportunities but calls for great spiritual living.

EARLY CHURCH AND PERSONAL EVANGELISM

The early Church used the method of personal evangelism almost exclusively. We read "Every day in the temple and at home they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus as the Christ".[1] That is personal evangelism, a daily witnessing both in the public assembly and in the private life of the home. When the Church became institutionalized this free, wholehearted sharing ceased and evangelism became more official and less personal. Down through the centuries there have been struggles between the official and the personal, resulting largely in the evangelistic loss of the Church. In more recent times there has come a new awakening in the personal. Personal evangelism is being stressed more and more. A special effort is made to enlist all believers in this service and make all Christian activity an evangelistic agency. This has its peculiar problems but also special advantages. It can only be done if the Christian life will be more definitely thought of as a way of living. The greatest indictment today comes by way of the lack of the vindication of the Christian principle in terms of living. But Christian living must ever issue from a deep and transforming experience in the soul. Christian living is too exacting to rely upon any superficial motivation. It takes the experience of God in the soul to send the life into the way of Christian living. Such an experience demands thought and and life-surrender.. It is possible only when people take time to wait upon God and purposefully seek his will in all of life. There are many who fail to find God in the inner recesses of their being, therefore they also fail to express him in their thought and conduct. Only when people live the Christian life are they living testimonies of the saving and keeping grace of God and will their lives turn many unto righteousness. The opportunity for evangelism through personal contact and life is large and should have more earnest consideration. There should be more people who give diligence to have their lives so completely conformed to Jesus Christ that they will constantly point others to the Christ. Personal evangelism is the privilege and responsibility of every believer. "They that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."[2]

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[1] Acts 5:42.

EVANGELISM THROUGH CHURCH ORGANIZATION

During the last half of the nineteenth century two rather distinct lines of development marked the progress of the Christian movement. On the one hand there was a growing mass movement in evangelism as expressed in the special revival meetings which occupied a conspicuous place in the history of the Church. This movement continued to gain in strength and influence, reaching its greatest extent and power during the early years of the twentieth century. It has largely influenced the thought and life of the Church, but in more recent years has taken a more secondary place. On the other hand, there was a growing interest in Church organization. This began rather modestly but has been carried to such great efficiency that today, viewed from the angle of technique, many congregations present a group of rather complex organizations. These organizations began with groups in the Church, and in general have resulted in organizations within the Church rather than of the Church. This has at times caused duplication and unnecessary competition, but the results have been far reaching. The Church has come to great power through this enlarged organization. The large and varied ministry which she is rendering could not be possible without such organizations. Church organization has its problems, and there is need of adjustment, but it represents the work of the best thought of the church leaders for several decades, and is a great asset in the Christian movement. Possibly the greatest weakness in the whole movement of Church organization lies in the fact that this movement has too largely been unrelated to the supreme task of the Church. Whenever organizations are used for spiritual purposes there is new meaning and power. Too often organizations have been used to serve lesser interests and promote selfish purposes. That always causes duplication and conflict. While everyone familiar with the modern Church is solicitous to bring all agencies into the most helpful correlation, yet using what has been built, is as important as building new. There is little guarantee that those who can find no spiritual value in what has been built will find such value in a new structure.

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[2] Daniel 12: 3.

The movement of Church organization, while it has made great progress, has not covered the whole field of the Church. Its greatest efficiency has been reached in the field of childhood and youth and women's work. But even in these spheres there are many who are not included. Among the men of the Church organization has not been very successful. The most successful effort from the point of enlisting men has been the Adult Bible Class movement, but generally there is no comprehensive program to call out the larger cooperation on the part of the men. Giving due credit to all that has been done, it still remains true that the man-power of the Church has not been effectively harnessed for a challenging aggressive. One cannot but wonder what would have happened if during the past the men of the Church would have been enlisted through some great organization. The greatest accomplishments of the Church during the past years have been achieved through the organization of the forces. What a splendid service by the childhood and youth of the Church has been rendered through organization. How much strength has been brought to the local church, and what mighty forces for world redemption have been released through the organization of the women in the Church! There are great gains which could never have been made without this harnessing of the forces through organization. There are greater gains yet unrealized which called for added attention to efficiency in organization.

During the years when these two movements developed in the Church, there has been a tendency to separate these more and more as each was carried to its greatest development. This has not only caused loss but misunderstanding, disinterestedness, and sometimes conflict. What is needed is a clear understanding of the spiritual meaning and power of Church organization for evangelism. Instead of holding these two apart they should be brought into the closest possible relationship. It seems as if God had been specially preparing the Church for a great evangelistic aggressive through Church organization. If the Church will become efficient in the use of organization for evangelism, there will be a great spiritual ingathering. There are three special advantages offered for evangelism through church organization.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CONTACTS

These organizations provide the largest number of contacts. Every contact is an evangelistic opportunity. Most churches would be greatly impoverished in contacts if it were not for the organizations. Those contacts which the church makes apart from the organization, often lack definiteness and appealing power. It is a definite gain when a person is won for some church organization. It is true that some times this is a substitute for the Church, and thus membership in an organization seems to make membership in the Church more difficult. That is possible only when those who direct the work of the organization have a limited vision and a selfish purpose. Generally membership in some organization means a first step toward the Church. Winning of people to membership in some organization is a work which relates vitally to that of evangelism. In this way a larger number of people can be enlisted in the work of evangelism. The building of a definite Christian atmosphere in these organizations has also great evangelistic value. Through these organizations a larger number of people can participate in the work of evangelism. Through the fellowships offered in these organizations a personal word can more easily be spoken and a personal invitation extended. One of the most difficult things in present day evangelism is the establishment of contacts with those who need to be led to Christ. Many an evangelistic effort fails because such contacts are not made. In most of the special evangelistic efforts those who are won are those with whom the Church made definite contacts prior to such an effort. Why should not these organizations be used more? What a pity that in many congregations these opportunities are little noted and scarcely used! Sometimes this is due to the fact that people are ignorant and do not know the opportunities which are theirs. In a Sunday School it was suggested to make a survey to list all those with whom contact is made through the school. The pastor, although not opposed, said "That is unnecessary for we know who these are." But when the survey was finished and the prospects listed, that pastor frankly confessed that he had no idea that the field was so large and inviting. With these facts before the leaders a special effort was planned and a large ingathering resulted. Sometimes people know but do not seem to care. They lack conviction born out of a sense of urgency. They fail to be moved by the spiritual needs of those with whom they fellowship thus intimately. Many opportunities are simply passed by because people fail to really care. Sometimes it is due to a sense of personal inability and inefficiency. People fear to raise the question of personal religion with others. They are afraid that they cannot answer the questions asked or meet the objections raised. There should be a deeper interest and a greater readiness to use these opportunities for evangelistic gains. These contacts carry with them large opportunities, but also large responsibilities. "To whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required."[3]

NORMAL APPROACHES PROVIDED

These organizations offer the most normal approaches to life. One of the strange facts about religion is that it seems to be difficult to cloth the religious convictions and expressions in language which is normal. There is a tendency to give strangeness to the voice, the act, and the language. This is possibly due to the fact that there is a deep sense of the mystical in religion. Whenever man enters into religious thought or activity he seems to be overawed with a sense of reverence. He feels that he is in the presence of an unseen power which lifts him above the material and earthly. The history of religion discloses how men sought some high place where upon to build their altars. There has always been an uplift of life in worship. That has its value and should not lightly be set aside. When religion ceases to bring the sense of the mystical and the sacred, it ceases to be a spiritual power. Yet there is loss when this sense of the sacred lifts religion and religious expression into an unnatural realm of thought and life. The more natural the approach the more powerful the appeal. This is made possible through church organization as nowhere else.

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[3] Luke 12:48.

In the building of all these organizations there has been a definite effort to find the most normal approach to the life. Thus an organization has been built to serve the smallest child as well as the most mature life. The presentation of the truth is so carefully graded and the organization so adjusted that they will best fit into the capacity of the life. This sometimes calls forth criticism from some who do not understand. They find some omission in a lesson for a child and immediately conclude that the teacher is seeking to evade some Christian teaching, when the fact is that in most cases the teacher is seeking to lay the foundation for the presentation of the larger truth. Whenever a truth is brought to a life in such terms that it can be understood, the way is being cleared for a larger, more inclusive truth to be presented later. Through these organizations there is a graded approach to the life through which a gradual unfolding of the greater truth is made possible.

This is beautifully illustrated in the approach to childhood and youth through the Sunday School. Through the Home Department a religious atmosphere is built around the child in the home, during those days when the life is most receptive to influences. Through the Cradle Roll and Beginners Departments the little child is brought from the home into the larger fellowship with other children and is introduced to God's family in which there are many children. What an experience for a little child to learn that all the little children, white, brown, red, black, etc. are God's children. This sense of the Divine family has a great spiritual value in the life of the child. Through the Primary Department the child is introduced to God's world. This Heavenly

Father has a beautiful world. One of the most meaningful songs for this group is "This is my Father's World." The hills, the trees, the flowers, the seas, the mountains, all belong to God. He made all things, and he watches over all things. The Junior Department introduces the child to God's Book. This Father who has a large family and a great world has a wonderful book. In this Book there is his special message to man. In this he points the way we should go and what we should do. In this he issues a special call to us to give him our lives and enter into his service. If such a normal approach is made to the life it is not too much to expect that every boy and girl will yield definitely to Jesus Christ before leaving the Junior Department. This is a normal accomplishment. Then through the Intermediate Department the child is brought face to face with the fact that this Heavenly Father has a wonderful Son whom he gave for the salvation of all men and who now is ready and willing to become a personal friend and helper for all who will accept him as their friend. Then through the Senior Department the child is introduced to the world as a field of service. Once more the thought is turned to the world but this time it is not primarily to look upon its beauty and majesty, but its need. Here are many calls for help. Here is an opportunity to invest life for largest returns. What shall it be, a selfish investment or an investment of self-giving? The decision is largely made during these years. Then through the Young Peoples Department the life is brought face to face with those larger relationships and adjustments of life. During this time many of the values of life which hitherto had little consideration are brought under a new study and evaluation. Through this study life is guided in its adjustments and such adjustments influence the whole future development of the life. Then through the Adult Department the life is reinforced with moral and spiritual power for the great tasks which must be faced and burdens which must be borne. Also added comfort is brought to those who are slowly passing down the shadow-side of life. The whole approach is normal, but tremendously significant for the spiritual furnishing of a life. This normal approach through organization is one of the most vital aspects of evangelism.

GROUP SANCTIONS FURNISHED

These organizations offer the most natural and powerful group sanction. In all evangelistic efforts appeal to group action is made, but too often such appeal lacks power because the group lacks stability. The group is not a permanent group. Sometimes the group fails to provide adequate opportunity for fellowship and the creation of a group consciousness. In this the Church organizations also serve to strengthen evangelism by furnishing groups which offer opportunity for mutual fellowship and which have permanency. A teacher was presenting the Christian life in a Sunday morning lesson to a class of boys about twelve years of age. After listening for a short time one of the boys interrupted the teacher by asking "Why is not Jimmie a Christian?", adding "If he were a Christian this whole class would be Christian." After a few moments the conversation turned to Jimmie and he was asked to become a Christian and was helped into the Christian life by his classmates and associates. That is group sanction. The group sanction of such a group has spiritual value. One of the strongest forces holding this boy for the Christian life was this Christian group. No one can fully measure the value of such a group sanction. Church organization is the only agency which furnishes such a sanction. Of course sometimes these groups lack a distinct Christian consciousness. There are Church groups which do not stress the ideal as did that class of boys. In some Church groups it seems quite possible for people to hold membership without being strongly urged to become Christians and live the Christian life. Such groups fail in the most essential thing. If these groups are distinctly Christian they will render a great service for evangelism through such a group sanction. There is a great opportunity for definite service.

Church organization has not generally been listed as a method of evangelism, but should be so considered. Why introduce any organization into the Christian Church if such an organization has no relationship to the supreme task of the Church? Much loss is sustained because too often people organize without definitely committing the organization to the work of evangelism. Church organization represents an advance step in the development of the Christian movement. While there may be a surplus of organizations in some instances, causing unnecessary duplication and irritation, yet no one who really knows their worth would wish to cast aside the help secured through these organizations. The question is, can and will the Church definitely relate these forces to the great work of evangelism?

EVANGELISM THROUGH THE REGULAR CHURCH SERVICES

Not every service must necessarily provide for a public confession or forward-step, but every service should be so planned and carried out that it will contribute definitely to the work of building the Christian life. At times there should be a public appeal and an opportunity for decision. The manner in which such decision is made may vary but should be definite and expressive of wholehearted decision. This applies especially to the preaching service. Why should not the truth preached be applied? There are always people who are in the valley of decision and need to be urged to close the issue by a definite commitment of life to God. This may be done at times in connection with the morning preaching service with splendid effect. Some pastors are doing this frequently with splendid results. In many congregations the morning service offers the greatest opportunity, in some the evening service is the time of greatest opportunity. Every pastor should study his own field and then work out his own plan as the needs demand. The important thing is that these services be used for evangelistic appeal.

To make these services fruitful for evangelism there must be a definite program of sermon building. The selection of a sermon topic should not be the way of least resistance to fill a half hour with something to say; nor should it be the effort to find something which will produce the idea of novelty and create public discussion, nor should it be the search after some theme in the discussion of which one can display great learning and versatility in reading, but it should always be a choice of that which will most adequately bring a spiritualizing truth to those who shall come to hear. Such a selection should be made far enough in advance that whole series of sermon topics may be viewed together. With such a list before him each preacher should ask the question, "What have I a right to expect from the congregation if I present these truths?" Sermon topics are too often unrelated and lacking in teaching quality. Some pastors plan the whole year's preaching at the opening of the year. This gives order and meaning to the whole effort. The preaching services will lack evangelistic power unless there will be definiteness in the preaching. If teachers prepared lessons as some pastors prepare their sermons, they could not hold their classes for three months. Yet preaching should lead to definite results as well as teaching. What a moment it is when the minister arises as the representative of God to speak to the congregation! Such a service should have the fullest preparation, first of all by the selection of themes and also by the preparation made for the delivery of the message. Many a congregation is yearningly asking its pastor "Have you any message from God?" There is too much preaching which does not represent God. It represents a theory, a discussion, a personal ambition, a desire to receive personal recognition, but fails to represent God. Such preaching does not produce evangelistic results. One of the urgent needs of the present time is for the minister of the Gospel to make the preaching service an evangelistic force through definite, constructive and progressive Gospel-preaching. Why should a minister trifle away his time with matters that are of little consequence when he has a message to deliver which ministers to the eternal? It takes great Gospel preaching to release spiritual influence and power. It takes men with burning hearts to preach so that men will want and find God.

To make these services fruitful for evangelism there must also be sufficient variety to arrest the attention of all present. This can be done more easily in the evening service. The morning service lends itself more fully to a dignified, thought-provoking worship service, while the evening service may be made more flexible. Both services have evangelistic value, yet the evening service is primarily evangelistic. Many attempts have been made to give special character to the evening service, but none have really contributed much to the permanency and power of the Sunday evening service. The most successful way is to make this an evangelistic service. A sane, earnest, evangelistic appeal may not always call forth the greatest congregation, but will hold the interest longer than any other effort. Some have tried the forum, others have tried pictures, others have tried special programs, but all these serve but for a time. Evangelism has the greatest attractive power in the long run. To make such a service really appealing there should be the discussion of those subjects which are vital to life. There should also be a strong element of fellowship and a happy, deeply spiritual atmosphere. Wherever possible a larger participation in the service should be provided through which the congregation can enter into personal expression in worship and Christian conviction. The service should be so built and carried out that a definite spiritual deposit is made in the lives of those present. The service should not be unduly long, and fixed at an hour which makes the strongest appeal. Some opportunity should be provided for people to elicit further spiritual help through pastoral visitation and fellowship with others. This can sometimes best be done through specially prepared cards which are placed in the pews. It may also be done through special workers who will meet all newcomers and visitors and offer such assistance and help. Many a person has thus been brought to a response which later led to a conference out of which there has issued a new life. It is necessary to bring the Gospel appeal in the most winsome way to those who attend, but also necessary to provide for added opportunity for personal decision and life adjustment. The preaching service is one of the most powerful spiritual forces in the Christian Church, why should not this also be made one of the most fruitful services for evangelism?

CHAPTER VII

EVANGELISM AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE CHURCH

RELIGIOUS education is not something new in the Christian Church. It is not something superadded to that which the Church had in the beginning. It is not something which is contrary to the genius and spirit of Christianity. Jesus of Nazareth, the founder of the Christian Church, was a teacher. He was a great teacher. He was an efficient teacher. His public ministry was largely a teaching ministry. He was not only a teacher of his own time, but he has come to be recognized as a teacher of all times. He is the master-teacher at whose feet the great teachers of the Christian centuries have sat and learned. He has proven himself the master-teacher in the field of methodology. His method was simple, direct, but so pedagogically sound that it is the model of all true teaching. He is also the master-teacher in subject matter. His approaches to life, his great principles of kingdom building, and especially his spirit have made his teachings stand out with unparalleled significance. It is true that Jesus is not known as well today as a teacher as he deserves to be known. In some Christian groups he is well known as "The Christ," "The Redeemer," "The Son of God," "The Lord," etc., but often little known as "The Teacher." The New Testament records, however, make it very clear that the contemporaries of Jesus recognized him as a great teacher. Nicodemus, who himself was a teacher, came to Jesus and said, "We know that thou art a teacher come from God."[1] The two disciples who left John and followed Jesus, addressed him with the question, "Teacher, where abidest thou?"[2] The rich young man who sought light concerning the question of eternal life, said to Jesus, "Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?"[3] The collectors of the temple-tax asked Peter, "Doth not your teacher pay the half shekel?"[4] The scribes and pharisees said to Jesus, "Teacher, we would see a sign from thee."[5] Jesus himself accepts this designation when he said, "It is enough for the disciple that he be as his teacher."[6] The disciples also called Jesus teacher. When they brought him food as he sat at Jacob's well they said, "Teacher, eat."[7] His most intimate friends called him teacher. When Martha called her sister Mary in the hour of their deep grief, she said, "The teacher is here and calleth for thee."[8] When the disciples faced the storm on the lake they turned instinctively to Jesus and said, "Teacher, carest thou not that we perish?"[9] But Jesus was not only recognized as a teacher, but as a master-teacher. Nicodemus said he was a teacher come from God.[10] Nathaniel said, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the king of Israel."[11] The multitudes recognized the superiority of his teaching when they said, "He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes."[12] There was an awareness of reality in his life which made him such a great teacher. In the words of Frederick Rittelmeyer, "Jesus should not be given a place among those who philosophize, but a place of his own as the spokesman of philosophy itself."[13] The officers who were sent to take Jesus returned saying, "Never man so spake."[14] Peter, voicing the feeling of the disciples, said, "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."[15] The evangelist who records the life of Christ uses the familiar phrase, "He opened his mouth and taught them, saying,"[16] It would be impossible to read the new Testament and not note how frequently Jesus is addressed as teacher. In the face of this it seems strange that there should be so much hesitancy in the Church to develop the teaching ministry as there is. This is largely due to the fact that the Jesus of Theology is better known than the Jesus of the New Testament. In the early Church this value was greatly appreciated. The teaching ministry was prominent. The early Church, following her Master, was a teaching Church. In the book of Acts, we read, "And every day in the temple and at home, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus as the Christ."[17]

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[1] John 3: 2.

[2] John 1: 38.

[3] Matt. 19: 16.

[4] Matt. 17: 24.

[5] Matt. 12: 38.

[6] Matt. 10: 24, 25.

[7] John 4: 32.

[8] John 11: 28.

[9] Mark 4: 38.

[10] John 3: 2.

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[11] John 1:49.

[12] Matt. 7:28.

[13] Behold the Man, Frederick Rittelmeyer, pg. 61.

[14] John 7:46.

[15] John 6:68.

[16] Matt. 5:2.

In the account of the institution of the offices in the church, the two words "pastor" and "teacher" are so related that it seems they indicate a twofold function in one person. The Holy Spirit who institutes these offices gave some to be pastor-teachers.[18] Not pastor-orators, nor pastor-organizers, nor pastor-sociologists, but pastor-teachers. This shows how greatly the teaching ministry was prized in the early Church. The Apostle Paul in setting forth the qualifications of a bishop, overseer of a church, said he must be "apt to teach."[19] Not only should the pastor and the bishop be teachers, but there should be others who give themselves to the work of teaching in the Church. In Paul's last letter addressed to Timothy, whom he had charged with the responsibility of organizing the Church more fully and adequately, he says, "The things which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also."[20] Paul fully realized the importance of teaching and made provision that teachers be set apart for the special task of religious education. In writing to the churches Paul frequently emphasized this teaching ministry. Writing to the Colossians he says that the word of Christ is to dwell among them in all wisdom and teaching.[21] Writing to the Ephesians he says that the believers were taught in Christ.[22] In writing to the Thessalonians he says they have no need of instruction in brotherly love, for they were taught in this. Many other references might also be added. All this shows that the Apostolic Church valued most highly this teaching ministry.

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[17] Acts 5 : 42.

[18] Eph. 4 : 11.

[19] I Tim. 3 : 2.

[20] II Tim. 2 : 2.

[21] Col. 3 : 16.

VARIOUS TEACHING MINISTRIES

In the development of the Church there have been various teaching ministries. These have exerted no small influence in the growth and development of the Church. First, the ~~Christian home~~ has been a very effective agency in religious education. In the home both precept and example are of very great importance. Whenever the home carries on a vital teaching ministry the community feels its impact for good. It is a sad fact that today many homes have largely delegated this function to the Church, but religious education cannot be at its best without the co-operation of the home. No doubt methods must change and some of the ways in which the home taught religion in the past are impossible now, but the home cannot therefore delegate this work to others. It must take its share of the responsibility.

The public services of the ~~Church~~ have also been educational forces. Every sermon preached has teaching value. It would be difficult to measure the teaching power of the pulpit. It is true that often preaching is more exhortation than teaching, but there is always a teaching element present. Early in the history of the Church there were developed the catechetical schools, which have held a large place in the teaching ministry of the Church. These schools were especially devoted to the task of teaching the doctrines of the Christian faith, although they did not wholly neglect the matter of conduct. The far reaching influence of these catechetical schools is easily discovered in the history of the Christian movement. In more recent times the Sunday School has been added as an additional teaching ministry. Much may be said about these schools regarding their low pedagogical standards and their inefficient teachers, yet if it had not been for the Sunday Schools there would be a still greater dearth of religious knowledge in our day. Many have been directed to Christ and helped in Christian living through the teaching of the Sunday School. The parochial schools also have exerted a great influence and have done much to spread the teaching of the Church. To all this might yet be added the founding of colleges and universities for higher learning. Many of the leading institutions of higher learning had their beginning in or through the Church, and there are today many schools managed and supported by the Church. All this shows that the Church has not been without interest in the work of teaching. Religious education has had a place in the best thought of the Church at all times.

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[22] Eph. 4:20, 21.

THE NEW EMPHASIS

But someone asks if the Church has had a teaching ministry in the past, why emphasize religious education so much in our day? Why should this ministry be given such a large place in the thought and program of the Church now? These are fair questions and deserve an intelligent answer. The answer will largely determine the attitude toward this new interest in the Church. That religious education is receiving a new emphasis is very evident. That there is an effort to give a much larger place to this ministry cannot be denied. That there are many who believe that a proper development of the teaching ministry will give the Church a power hitherto unknown, and make Christianity an unprecedented force in the lives of both the individual and the community, is very evident. There are great claims made for religious education. There are great promises set forth in this movement. Never before in the history of the Church has such a far reaching and determined effort been put forth to make effective the teaching ministry of the Church. It is therefore a valid question to ask. What lies back of this movement? If this emphasis is nothing more than a spasmodic emotion going forth out of a new interest, we may indeed question the worthwhileness of this whole endeavor. If on the other hand this movement is born out of some great convictions, we may well study its significance and give it our support.

Historically, this interest follows closely upon the rediscovery of Jesus as a teacher. During the closing years of the nineteenth and opening years of the twentieth centuries the Church inaugurated a new evaluation of the teaching ministry of Jesus. The immediate result of this was a new interest in the teaching of Jesus. Efforts were made to set forth the teaching of Jesus in the New Testament in bold relief through various markings. His teachings were classified and related to the various phases of life. Many books were written on the teachings of Jesus, the religious teachings of Jesus, the moral teachings of Jesus, the social teachings of Jesus, the relation of the teaching of Jesus to the teaching of his own day, etc. This rediscovery of Jesus as a teacher also led to an examination of the teaching ministry of the Church, which soon revealed the fact that the Church was weak in this great ministry, and especially in America, religious education was not a vital force. The conviction which grew out of this was that the Church must give more attention to this part of her work.

It should not be overlooked that this awakening in the Church came about at a time when there was a general interest awakened in education. The past thirty years have been the most fruitful in the development of education, both extensively and intensively, in the history of the world. All this has greatly influenced the Church, and has found expression in four great convictions.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND PROGRESS

There is a growing conviction that education is an essential for true progress, and that the highest and best lies not in the path of ignorance but of knowledge. Many believe that the history of education is the history of civilization, and that the trend of education is the trend of civilization. In former times education was largely looked upon as a training for some profession, therefore people who did not plan to take up a profession did not feel the need of education. But this has changed today. Education is not only to prepare for a position but for life. In this there seems to be an approach to the position of Jesus, who thought of education as a means through which to make life's experiences significant.

There are several evidences of this larger conviction. (1) In every nation there has been a special effort to perfect the educational systems and establish educational opportunities for all their citizens. Some nations have overthrown old systems of long standing and introduced modern educational methods. All have revised their systems of education. (2) Attendance at school is made increasingly more obligatory. There is a growing sentiment against child labor which robs the child of its rightful development. The state is making it obligatory that children attend school and is doing much to furnish adequate educational facilities. (3) The courses of study have been carefully revised and made more practical and pedagogically more correct. (4) The qualifications of teachers have been steadily increased. There has been an increasing emphasis upon trained teachers. The natural result of this is that there are today more persons in school than ever before. Education is thus becoming more general. This has presented to the Church a new challenge.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND MOTIVE POWER

There is the conviction that adequate motive power for the acceptance and maintenance of high ideals can only be conserved through the right kind of education. People are often motivated by some emotional appeal, but unless this is strengthened by the right kind of education the motive dies out and the effort fails. Great moral achievements will be only momentary unless there will be generated a motive power strong enough to conserve these values. This motive power is released through the right kind of education. When Frances Willard put scientific temperance education into the schools of this land she started a teaching ministry which in due time generated the motive power to put the saloon out of business. If America is to be a temperance land there must be the right kind of education to conserve the value of the 18th Amendment to the Constitution. This fact is so well known that there is no need to argue it at length. This has brought to the Church a new challenge. If the great spiritual values for which the Church stands are to be maintained and made operative in human society there must be a teaching ministry which will release motive power.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MORE THAN AMASSING FACTS

There is a growing conviction that education is more than the amassing of facts. The whole conception of education is undergoing a marked change. It is clearly recognized by the leaders of educational forces that an education which does not produce character is after all faulty. Much of the education of the past was sadly lacking in moral power. It is not enough to educate people to have new experiences, they must be educated to make moral choices. They must learn to make experiences significant, not merely for an emotional thrill, but for the common good of mankind. The late Dr. Cope said, "Education is the directed development of persons into the full experience of all their social universe."[23] Dr. Soares, of Chicago University, says, "Education is a scientifically directed process of developing progressively socialized personality."[24] These definitions may not say the final thing about education, but they do point out the direction of the thought of leading educators.

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[23] Religious Education in the Church, H. F. Cope, pg. 36.

[24] Class Lectures on Principles of Religious Education.

There seem to be three great demands placed upon those who today are leaders in education. (1) Education must be of such a character that it will conserve the best values of society. (2) Education must not only furnish facts, but call forth conduct. (3) Education finds its greatest significance in the development of right relationships. Education which separates peoples and instills jealousies and hatreds is not real education. The goal of true education is helpful fellowship with all mankind, the establishment of a universal brotherhood. This gives to education a much larger task than it has ever assumed before and places a great responsibility upon all who are engaged in this work. This also has challenged the Church. The Church stands pre-eminently for character-values. It has not only theory but the transforming power. It must have a vital part in this work of giving moral and spiritual content to modern education. If the Church should stand aside in an hour such as this and not interest herself in education, she would be untrue to her founder and fail humanity at a point of great need. All this has awakened interest in education.

LARGE PLACE IN PROGRAM OF CHURCH

There is the conviction that if the Church is to measure up to her opportunity in this time of challenge, she must give attention to her own teaching ministry. The work of education must have a larger place in the thought and program of the Church. While the Church has always done something along the line of education, yet she has often depended more largely upon certain inspirational appeals than she has upon definite teaching. But that there is a change is evident from the following attitudes of the Church.

First, churches are beginning to ask for preachers who are able to teach. In the past the question most often asked was, Is he a good preacher? Today there are many who are asking, Is he a good teacher? Can he teach? Can he lead in the teaching ministry of the Church?

Second, this same emphasis is also being made in the selection of teachers for the Sunday School. Formerly it was largely a question of willingness on the part of the prospective teacher. But today there is a growing demand that these persons be not only willing but able to teach. Teachers are sought who are able intelligently to interpret Jesus Christ to the growing life and lead a life into vital and meaningful fellowship with Christ. Teachers who rightly divide the word of truth. Teachers who themselves are the embodiment of the truth they teach in terms of character and conduct and who have the ability to present the truth of God in such a way that it will have meaning for a life at every stage of development, and for all of life.

Third, there is also an earnest search after a better curriculum of education in the Church. There is a feeling that not every truth is equally effective at all stages of development, and therefore there must be a proper grading of the Gospel message to the needs of a life. But not only in the organization of the material, but also in the extension of the instruction there is added interest. The Church has a greater task than merely to develop a good Sunday School. There is a community responsibility. This has led to the enlargement of the whole scope of the teaching ministry.

(4) There is an interest in the development of school equipment such as Sunday School buildings and facilities for training. Many churches are today spending large sums of money for the teaching ministry. All this reveals a new interest.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF ABIDING WORTH

It is not so difficult to trace the interest of the Church as to outline the effort which is being made to meet this need. That this new interest is greatly moving the Church is clearly evident. There seems to be no program as yet fully acceptable to all, but there are a few great things quite clearly seen. If we look back over the past we can discover a few movements which have been vital in the making of a program which is to be adequate to meet this larger task of the Church. Possibly the greatest single contribution which has been made is that of placing the personality at the center of the whole teaching ministry. Instead of making lessons the important thing, life is made the important thing. This we believe will remain as a permanent value in the teaching ministry for the Church. But when the question is raised, what does that life really need, the answers have been varied.

(1) Historically, the first interest was in lessons. With the life in the midst the first need which seemed to become evident was that of the right kind of lesson. This gave rise to the building of graded lessons. With much enthusiasm these graded lessons were introduced and accepted, but no sooner were they introduced than added trouble began. To teach graded lessons there must be trained teachers, and because there were no trained teachers many churches put

away graded lessons as quickly as they introduced them.

(2) This led to the development of teacher training courses. It was thought that if there were adequate training courses the question of trained teachers would be solved, and that in turn would solve the question of graded lessons. But several difficulties were soon encountered in this effort. First, it was hard to get specialists to prepare such courses. These courses, to be adequate, had to cover various fields and no one person is efficient in all these fields. Training courses were soon published, but many of these failed to meet the pedagogical needs, and therefore failed to elicit interest. Second, even after these courses were prepared it was often difficult to find an efficient teacher to teach a course in teacher training. Most ministers were trained in preaching, not teaching. In many congregations there were no trained laymen for the work. This greatly handicapped the work of teacher training. Third, even when there was a good teacher, there were often none to take the course. People did not find the time or have the disposition to take such a course.

(3) This led to the development of the Community Training Schools. In this way it was hoped that the matter of better leaders might be met. It was also thought that a community interest being aroused many more would enroll as prospective teachers. These schools have done a great service and in many places are still carried on with good success, but even here the returns in trained teachers were often meager and within reach of only a few, especially those who lived in the cities and immediate surrounding communities. This led to another effort.

(4) The establishment of Leadership Training Schools and Summer Schools of Religious Education, in connection with the various gatherings and conventions of the churches. These schools are now rapidly developing and are promising added help along the line of training for a more effective teaching-ministry. Much good has resulted and will result from these various efforts, but it still is an open question whether we will ever have efficiency in training until there will be more attention given to this in the local church. There is still lacking a real consciousness of the need of training for this ministry in many local churches. As long as this is lacking the teaching ministry cannot be made really vital.

Another great contribution which has been made and which will be of permanent value is the enlargement of the teaching ministry to include the work of week day religious instruction and Daily Vacation Bible Schools. These movements are gaining in favor, not only with the church people, but also with the leaders in the public schools. It has been clearly proven that such instruction is possible without any infringement of the public school system. Various methods are used, but in all these there is some correlation with the public schools. While the results have not been revolutionary, they have been sufficient to prove the value of such efforts. There have been enough moral and spiritual gains to prove that the Church has a real contribution to make in this larger program of education. There are still many things to be worked out, but the way has been opened for a vital ministry of the Church, not for numerical gain only, but for moral and spiritual results in the thought and life of the community. One great need is the proper correlation of this work with the Sunday School. There is a tendency to make this instruction independent of the Sunday School, and really a substitute for the Sunday School, but this does not seem to be a wise movement. There is room for all of these agencies if the work is properly correlated. Another problem in some places is the lack of funds for this purpose. Here also the Church needs to awake to a new sense of responsibility.

RELATION TO EVANGELISM

The task of religious education and evangelism is a common task. Dr. Goodell has well said, "It would be difficult to conceive of a greater misunderstanding of the principle of Christian training than to represent evangelism and religious education as opposed to each other."[25] In the ministry of Jesus and that of the early Church these two activities were closely related and mutually complementary. Jesus came to seek and to save the lost, but he also came to teach. He is the world's Saviour, but also the world's greatest teacher. The first and dominant impulse in the early Church was that of evangelism,—the winning of others to Christ, but the bond which held this early group together was the common teaching which they had received from Christ, and which they sought to pass on to others. The essential element in this teaching was the revelation of God in Christ in terms of experience and life. This common teaching forms the basis of the Gospel as found in the New Testament. The written Gospels, the Epistles, and the other forms of Christian literature of the first two centuries, constitute clear and convincing evidence that the early Church was a teaching Church as well as an evangelistic Church. All this centered in the experience of Christ in the life. The great urgency was that "Christ be formed in you"[26] and that he might find unhindered expression in thought and life. The ministry of education as an evangelistic means and power was highly prized by these followers of Christ. They sought to follow the Master in their endeavor to bring the knowledge of God in terms of saving fellowship to all men.

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[25] Evangelism of Youth, Roy C. Heffenstein, Dept. of Ev. and Life Service, Christian Church.

The early Church was faithful in teaching, but their teaching was definitely related to the supreme objective of their mission. The example of this Church has in it practical values for our day. There is a renewed interest in religious education. The Church is giving more thought and spending more money and energy upon religious education than ever before, but what is she seeking to accomplish? There are leaders in this field who are questioning whether the Church really knows what she is about. That there are some who see little more in this movement than an educational program paralleling quite closely the program of general education, is too evident. But merely to teach with a Christian emphasis is hardly religious education. That may mean little more than a different interpretation. It will possibly add a new system of thought and a new philosophy of life. Religious education must be more than merely a different way of handling truth, or even the furnishing of added facts. Religious education is the presentation of truth with the view of bringing those taught into life adjustment and fellowship with him who is the source of all truth. Christian religious education has for its objective the bringing of those taught into the experience of saving fellowship with

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[26] Gal. 4:19.

God through Jesus Christ. It is not primarily to furnish a new approach, a new theory, a new philosophy of life, but a new experience of God in the soul. If this is neglected religious education leads to confusion and fails to be a real minister of the spirit. If this is done there can be no conflict between religious education and evangelism. Religious education is a method and not a substitute for evangelism.

In the early Church religious education and evangelism were retained without any clear definition of separate functions. Such a distinction was unnecessary because there was no conflict. The two activities complemented each other normally and effectively. In the course of time a distinction was made and the teaching ministry began to take precedence over evangelism until finally the work of evangelism became very secondary. This change was no doubt inaugurated and hastened by the contact of Christianity with Gnosticism and was greatly strengthened through the development of Church authority. The result was that teaching became technical, standardized, and more concerned with conformity to belief and authority than with the experience of salvation. The primary emphasis in the teaching ministry was the acceptance of the authority of the Church instead of stimulating thinking and calling forth life response to the truth. The logical result was that there was a sharp division established between evangelism and religious education, pushing evangelism more and more into the background and causing the spirit of evangelism to wane.

This separation of evangelism and religious education has been a great loss for Christianity from which the Church has not yet recovered. Today when both of these activities are stressed with renewed emphasis, there are many, who, failing to see their relationship, accept the one but reject the other. Some accept religious education, but have no thought for, or interest in, evangelism, others are given to the promotion of evangelism, only to neglect, and sometimes oppose, religious education. The two activities are too often looked upon as parallel movements which rarely if ever touch and have little or nothing in common. As long as this conception prevails neither of these activities can be lifted to the highest power and influence. The Church must bring these into that mutually complementary relationship which they held in the early Christian movement if both are to contribute their fullest share to the bringing in of the kingdom. Evangelism must become more distinctly educational and religious education more distinctly evangelistic.

Religious education is not only related to evangelism, but is one of the most fruitful methods of evangelism. There are great evangelistic possibilities in the ministry of Christian education. The Church has at all times used this method but has never given it the large place it should have. Too often religious education has been limited, both in scope and content. It is, however, being seen with increasing clearness that the task of the Church is such that unless the evangelistic appeal is reinforced by added knowledge the Church must fail. There is alarming ignorance of spiritual things. Millions of children and young people are growing up without any religious instruction. Among adults there is an evident lack of the knowledge of the truth. Religious ignorance is always a great danger, but it is more dangerous to be spiritually ignorant today than ever before. Through modern applied science people generally have come into new liberties. This freedom is a great danger unless lives are undergirded by the truth of God. Unless there is the knowledge of moral and spiritual truth, life will be misled and brought to failure in the very attempt to use the freedom provided. These modern sciences have also opened the way for unprecedented release of conflicting theories and religious claims, all of which calls for the power of clear discrimination and value-judgments. If people lack knowledge there is confusion. Everywhere there is the urgency for more definite moral and spiritual knowledge. This is forcing upon the Church the need of more attention to the ministry of religious, or more specifically, Christian religious education.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

Religious education helps to make real and vital Christian experience. The basic fact of the Christian life is experience. Experience is an essential of true living. There is a very real sense in which the measure of experience is the measure of life. A person with limited experience is also of limited usefulness. There are two things needed for efficient living. First, the enlargement of experience, or the multiplication of experiences. Second, giving significance to the experience. The first is needed to call out the resources of life; the second, to organize the forces of life into constructive living. In public education the first is sometimes achieved without the controlling power of the second. The result is that life is frequently impaired and its energies wasted. In Christian experience both are present. Nothing equals an experience of personal salvation in its power to call forth the resources of life. Its richness lies in the fact that it brings a life into fellowship with the personality of God. In this there is also the ground for its significance. Such experience leads the life into a new fellowship in service, and its significance continues to increase as the life of fellowship continues and enlarges. It is the primary business of the Church to lead people into such an experience, and religious education is a vital factor in this effort.

It is the task of religious education to furnish the life with the truth of God in such a way that a sure ground may be furnished not only in the emotional accompaniment in the experience, but also in the truth of God. Such a ground furnishes a reasonable basis for belief, and includes the fact of God, the fact of his redemptive interest and activity, the fact of his revelation, the fact of his sacrificial offering in Christ, and the great fact of his readiness to forgive and receive sinful men. Upon such facts Christian experience may rest securely. Such instruction must also clearly set forth the need of the human soul, the blessing of salvation, the value of a saved life, and the joy and satisfaction of comradeship with God in a life of service. Often evangelism has been weakened because of the lack of religious background. Missionaries find that one of the chief difficulties in their work. They must often work months and years to build an approach to a life before there can be a really meaningful experience. The building of this background of truth is the task of religious education, and if well done this is one of the most powerful aids in the work of leading people into a meaningful and satisfying Christian experience.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND CHARACTER BUILDING

Religious education also helps in the culture of the Christian life, or the building of Christian character. One thing which greatly weakens the work of evangelism in many places and in many respects is the limited conception which people have of the saving work of God in a life. Many people seem to think that the process has practically been closed at conversion. The converted person is pronounced saved and many people who are interested in bringing that life to this experience cease to have any special concern for the person thus initiated into this saving relationship with God. It is taken for granted that the life will continue and if there is a default then the charge is usually made against the experience. It was a great religious emphasis when John Wesley pointed out the fact that there is a further work of grace to be experienced in the life of the believer, that the saving process is not closed at conversion. Sanctification is a doctrine which stresses the process in the experience of saving fellowship with God. This doctrine has had tremendous influence upon Christian culture, but has too often been made a resting place instead of a further release and empowering for still larger experiences. There is more in this saving fellowship than these experiences. There is regeneration, there is sanctification, but there are other attainments in grace and knowledge. It is true that the way of the righteous is as a shining light that shineth brighter and brighter, but this increasing light also brings new disclosures of duty and privilege. The Christian must grow in Christian attitudes, in Christian virtues, in Christian responses, and in Christian relationships.

The limitation of many of the evangelistic methods in promoting Christian culture has often been noted by both leaders and people. Some of the evangelists have tried to remedy this by perfecting some organization to function after they leave the field. Many pastors are finding evangelism through the normal organizations the most helpful way to combine the initial experience with a process of Christian culture. All this is forcing upon the Church a more constructive agency for evangelism. Character must be built as well as people initiated into the new life. Here again religious education is offering great help. This movement has permanency. It can lead the individual on to the ever enlarging meaning and purpose of the Christian life. It has a broad basis, large service and a continued inspiration. Gathering up the various expressions of life and unifying them in the efforts to build Christian character, the program of religious education seems to have what evangelism needs to enlarge and strengthen its work.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Religious education also furnishes special help for the establishment of the kingdom of God among men. There is a social aspect of the Christian life which implies human relationships. As already indicated, the Christian experience is the creation of a new order. The early Church made much of this. We possibly are not making enough of this in our day. The Church has substituted all kinds of relationships for this bond of a new order. There are denominational ties, doctrinal interpretations, religious ritualism and experimental emphasis. All of these have some value, but are inadequate. The

Church is confronted again and again with the question, What is the bond of Christian unity which distinguishes the Christians as a group? Denominational peculiarities can no longer be pressed as formerly, and doctrinal distinctions are no longer accepted as they once were. What shall be substituted? Possibly the Church is being driven to the fundamental thing. In the early Church it was this sense of a new order. It seems that Christianity is face to face with this same fact today. The Church must once more take her stand as in the world but not of the world. That is what the challenge of the hour implies.

One of the great needs for such vital living is knowledge. Knowledge of the principles of the Kingdom. These principles are laid down in the Bible. They have been vindicated in the life of Jesus Christ, but must be concretely worked out in terms of Christian living. It is very evident, therefore, that there is need of an intelligent understanding of the Word of God. Protestantism has done much to preserve the Word of God by its emphasis upon inspiration, but there is needed to day the preservation of the Word in terms of its spiritual message. "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."[27] It would be difficult to think of a greater need in the work of evangelism just now than that of a better understanding of the spiritual message of the Bible. This message is discovered only as the Bible is studied in relation to the development of the Kingdom of God. It is in the new order which is being created through the Spirit of God that man finds the deeper meaning of the Book. This interpretation of the Word is furnished through the right kind of religious education.

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[27] II Cor. 3:6.

It is not enough, however, to discover the principles as laid down in the spiritual message of the Bible, there must also be knowledge of the outworking of these principles in history. Nineteen hundred years of Christian living lie back of the Church today. That means nineteen hundred years of the application of the principles of the Kingdom. Perhaps some are ready to charge the past with failure. It is easy to find fault with others, but one must be able to place himself into the circumstances of those who lived in the past and try to think with them and live in their age, then he will be able the better to understand both their failures and their achievements. The outworking of the Christian consciousness in human society is a great evangelistic aid. Knowledge of such outworking helps to build character and establish the Kingdom. Here again religious education is seeking to make available Church history as an evangelistic force.

The greatest interest, however, lies not in the past, but in the present. Evangelism means the making operative the spirit of Christ in this day and generation. This is the day of salvation. It is our only day. If the Church cannot release the saving truth of God in this time, she is a misfit and fails to serve her day. She must know the age, know something of the spirit, the temper, the deep urges, the tendencies and the forces at work. She must also know the problems and difficulties. All this is needed if she would be efficient in the work of evangelism. Here also religious education is assisting in the work of evangelism. It is the purpose of this movement to set forth the character of the age in such clearness and definiteness that the principles of the Kingdom may be applied with greater efficiency.

In all this the Church should not overlook the fact that a technique is needed as well as knowledge. Fundamentally there will always be the inner urge born out of saving fellowship with God. This urge must find expression in keeping with the principles of the Kingdom and the needs of the hour. But there must also be training in attitudes and relationships. This is a culture which is increasingly difficult because increasingly exacting. Through a proper training of the life there will be built up a technique which will make for Christian efficiency. Here the work of religious education among the children has great promise, for the children are far more susceptible to such training than are the adults. It may be that some things after which men strive cannot be gotten as long as the older folks whose attitudes are so fixed and whose responses are so unchanging are still leading in the Christian movement. It is very hard for some people to be Christians in some relationships, but in the work with children there lies the hope of a more Christian world. If Christ becomes enthroned in their lives in the days of their childhood, and if they are trained in those attitudes, so revolutionary yet fundamentally Christian, there is great reason to look for a better day for the Church in the tomorrow.

It should not be overlooked that religious education has its limitations also. There are many of the present generation largely untouched by religious education. Comparatively few people can be vitally interested in religious reading, study and thinking. The Church should be glad for those who respond, but must not forget those who do not respond. Religious education, therefore, is not a substitute for those other evangelistic agencies which have been and are fruitful in the winning of lives to Christ. More attention must be given today to that large company of people who are outside the Church and without Christ. A new evangelistic aggressive is needed to win the lost to Christ.

Nor will religious education substitute for those spiritual activities without which all evangelism will fail. There is needed prayer, consecration, and the leadership and empowering of the Holy Spirit. It is still true that it is not by might nor power, but through the Spirit that the Kingdom comes. Sometimes those who have promoted the work of religious education have weakened their efforts by minimizing the initial life-giving experience, confusing growth in, with growth into, the Christian life and neglecting to rely upon the Holy Spirit in this effort. The furnishing of a life with truth does not make unnecessary the work of God in the life through which the soul is quickened into newness of life. There must be the birth into life before there can be growth in the life. Nor does the fact that a child reacts differently from an adult mean that the child does not need to be born into life. To deny a child the right of a personal experience is to deny it a Divine heritage. Any attempt to rule God out of the process is religiously disastrous. Religious education should make the work of God more meaningful in the soul. If there is correct teaching the experience of God in the life will be more easily attained and more vital in the life. The fundamental need of every life is a new birth into spiritual life out of which will issue a new way of living.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FIELD OF EVANGELISM

THE field of evangelism is the sphere of human life. It includes all men and all of man's life. Wherever human beings are found, whether in the most primitive state or in the most highly developed civilization, evangelism is needed. This work is so vitally identified with the release and development of the human personality that it cannot be shut out of the realm of true living. This all inclusiveness of evangelism has often been lost sight of in the thought and life of the Church. Sometimes the field has been limited to the entrance into the Christian life; sometimes it has been limited to certain ages; sometimes it has been limited to certain localities, and sometimes to certain experiential values, but evangelism cannot be thus limited without loss. It can have no other limits than those of the human race. It must ever be co-extensive with humanity and cover the whole field of living. If all men are to be saved, then the saving outreach must include all men.

While the field is that of human life, it is not a field of uniform character. It does not present equal opportunity everywhere. The approach to the field must be made in various ways. Different kinds of services are needed at different places. Some parts of the field call for immediate ingatherings, while others must be made ready through carefully prepared instruction. The evangelistic emphasis must vary to meet the several needs of the field. There is only one evangelism, but this is so rich, so full, so varied that it must be presented according to the need of the particular part of the field under consideration.

1. THE FIELD OF CHILDHOOD

Ever since Jesus took little children into his arms and blessed them, saying, "To such belongeth the kingdom of heaven,"[1] there has been a growing interest in childhood. This interest is finding expression in an ever fuller appraisal of child life and an ever increasing activity in child welfare. Its deepest significance is found in the effort of the Church to furnish proper leadership and religious nurture for children. The period of childhood is the gateway through which each new generation enters; it is the ground for the ever recurring hope of a better day, and furnishes the largest opportunity for those of the present generation to make a really worth while contribution to the generations to come. Through the training of childhood noble ideals and worth while achievements may be perpetuated and the foundation laid for a still larger service to be rendered. It is a commonplace saying, yet one which embodies a great truth, that what we want the tomorrow to be we must put into the childhood of today. The wise man said long ago, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and even when he is old he will not depart from it."[2]

That childhood presents great opportunities is recognized with increasing clearness and conviction, and many leaders are seeking to make the most out of these opportunities. Some are turning to childhood for the purpose of exploiting these little ones for the realization of selfish ends. Others are turning to childhood for the purpose of implanting in their lives those nobler ideals which as yet have found but little expression in human society. In the Church also there is a great awakening of interest in the child. More adequate buildings are erected to provide for the comfort and interest of the child; more adequate lesson materials are prepared to bring the truth within the range of the interest and understanding of the child; more religious instruction is provided, bringing the child more fully under the challenge of the Gospel truth; more attention is given to the selection of workers with children that both in influence and pedagogical approach the child might have the best possible furnishings, and more emphasis is being placed upon the building of an atmosphere about the child which shall be so real and vital that the great truths of Christian-living will be deeply imbedded in the life. All this reinforces the truth that childhood is a great and fruitful field for evangelism. This in a measure has always been recognized, and yet often little heeded and much underrated. There have been, and yet are, some workers with children who see little evangelistic opportunity in the field of childhood. Not infrequently, when a program of evangelism for the local Church is planned, workers with children excuse themselves, saying that this does not apply to their work. This is a fundamental mistake and must be corrected. There is no field more fruitful and no evangelistic work more vital than that which is being done with children. If this, the foundation, is well laid, there will be no serious difficulty when the years of stress and strain come on. It is not an extravagant saying that evangelism cannot reach its fullest power until it becomes really vital in the lives of children. The very finest work in evangelism is possible in childhood.

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[1] Matt. 19: 14.

[2] Proverbs 22: 6.

As a field of evangelism, the field of childhood presents certain definite advantages.

First, there is the advantage of numbers. Children are more easily brought under the influence and teaching of the Church than are the adults. Most every local church touches large numbers of children. Through these again the church touches parents, brothers, sisters, other relatives and friends. The number is large and the possibilities are great.

Second, there is also the advantage of special receptivity. Children are alert and eager to know. They are ready to receive and willing to follow. They have special capacity to learn and can easily be led to definite life responses. Nor do children merely act on impulse. If the truth is given to them in terms which they can understand they feel deeply and will sincerely. Decisions made by children have profound meaning to them and strike deeply into life.

Third, there is the advantage of the absence of prejudice and personal bias. In childhood those barriers which in later life tend to intimidate and divide, are not strongly operative. This makes it possible to bring the truth of Christ in its comprehensiveness and power to the child. Older people make distinctions and recognize divisions which sometimes make the Gospel presentation difficult, but children are not thus limited. The daughter of a missionary in Japan who had found many girl friends in Japan was very lonely when the family visited America and after a few weeks plead that she might be permitted to return to her friends in Japan. This is a good illustration of the feeling of children. They do not find race, color, nationality, culture, etc. such barriers in their thinking. They are therefore more receptive to the great truth of a universal Gospel, which seeks to build all men into a great bond of friendship and fellowship. If religion is really seeking to bring about such a unity of life, then the work with the child holds first place. This fact has been lifted into great prominence in recent years through the World Friendship projects, such as the Doll project in Japan, the School Bag project in Mexico, and the Treasure Chest project in the Philippines. Such projects have found meaning in the life of the child because it is not difficult for the child to establish a kindly relationship with others.

Fourth, there is the advantage of a teaching-approach. The child has more time than the adult, therefore presents a larger opportunity for the teaching of the way of life. The approach of adult life often lacks such opportunity and therefore lacks much in effectiveness. The most persuasive power in the world is the truth. Sometimes people seek to substitute lesser things for the truth. But only as the truth is brought to a life will there be meaningful religious reaction. In our approach to the child the opportunity of presenting the truth is very great. In adult life there is not only less time, but more intellectual conflict. Adults are engaged in many things and it is often difficult for the message in a class or sermon to find entrance into the life because there is such preoccupation with other things. Even when it is possible to arrest the attention and engage the thinking there is often the problem of religious difficulties issuing out of the experiences of life. These difficulties raise serious questions and make the teaching approach more complicated. While the child has its own difficulties, yet these have not become so fully grounded in the seeming contradictions of life as in adult experience, therefore, they are less operative in the teaching activity. All this reinforces the truth that the field of childhood is a most fruitful field of evangelism.

Fifth, there is the advantage of natural response of the child-life to the things of God. Religion is not a foreign element in the life of a child. Every child responds easily to the religious appeal and seems to be waiting for some guiding hand to lead it into the experience of that spiritual good after which it deeply longs, but which it little comprehends.

Until recent years this fact was not fully understood. The first psychological findings in child study made the high peak of natural response in about middle adolescence, but more complete studies reveal the fact that much earlier in the life of the child there is a natural turning toward God which has great evangelistic opportunities. The Church should consider more earnestly this natural yearning of the child for conscious fellowship with God. Too often there has been lacking a religious expectancy in the lives of those who worked with children. They did not really believe children could have conscious experiences of personal salvation, and failed to find a place for evangelism in their work, therefore did not present the truth with such a purpose. But to rob the child of such an experience for which it is so uniquely fitted, is to rob it of its greatest heritage in all of life. Childhood is the time of loving commitment. It is natural for children to love, to trust, and to commit themselves to others. It is also natural for them to love, to trust, and to commit themselves to God.

In developing this field of childhood there are several basic needs. First, there must be Christian example. Life is far more important with the child than is the spoken word. Every child lays hold upon the life of the parent, the teacher, and the leader. It is profoundly influenced by the way those who teach them express their love for and loyalty to Jesus Christ. It is keenly sensitive to any fundamental contradiction. All this means that those who seek to guide children religiously must be true in life. Sometimes this is overlooked in the selection of children's workers. Sometimes it is thought that anyone can teach children. If the supreme purpose is merely to entertain the children for the moment or the class period, then possibly the selection is not so important, but if the supreme purpose is to so stimulate and direct the child that it will come to a conscious personal sense of fellowship with God, then only those who are living true Christian lives should be brought into this sanctuary. The first contradictions in the life of a child are usually introduced by their leaders. How often a child has said, "But Teacher does so," or "Mother does so," or "Father or Brother or Sister does so." What tragedies have resulted from such contradictions. No wonder Jesus said, "Whoso shall cause one of these little ones that believe on me to stumble, it is profitable for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck and that he should be sunk in the depth of the sea."[3] How carefully should those who deal with children guard their lives lest that which they teach is denied by that which they live.

This applies to all workers with children. It has special significance for parents. The coming of a child into the home often leads parents to think in terms of their own relationship to God and His Church. They feel a new urge to pray. Prayer at meals is often introduced, the family altar is thought of. All this is only natural and should have more genuine recognition. Parents have a greater responsibility than merely furnishing food, clothing and shelter for the child. They owe the child the example of a true life. They owe it the example of a Christian life. Often the Church is seriously handicapped in her work with children because that which she teaches does not find expression in the lives of the parents of the child. It also applies to those whom the Church appoints to deal with children. It may mean a sacrifice, but it is preeminently worth while. To live out the great truths in such a way that little children see in the life the vindication of their teaching is a great art and a blessed service. Perhaps sometimes the workers who are appointed to work with children are also too immature in Christian living because they are too young. It is not always a safe practice to appoint persons, who, although they may have learned some of the technique of teaching, are yet so young that they lack richness of life. Age cannot determine the qualification, but age must be recognized. The richer the life in Christian experience, the more influential that life in dealing with children. It is not enough to tell children what they should do, the truth must be lived out before them. There can be no vital evangelism among children if there is lacking the example of those who teach and direct childhood.

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[3] Matt. 18:6.

Second, there must be a spiritual environment. This has already been stressed in what has just been said, but there are some other elements which must be specially noted. Such an environment is possible only if worship is given its rightful place in both the Church and the home. True worship is largely a matter of atmosphere. It implies such an environing sense of the spiritual that the presence of God is discerned and the will challenged to come into full agreement with the will of God. In building such a spiritual environment spiritual worship must be built into the home. This truth needs to be restated and reaffirmed today, but the Church must do more than merely make such affirmation. The Church must take a more active part in helping the home build such an environment. There are many parents who are wholly ignorant of the resources and agencies available for the spiritualizing of the home. They are spiritually helpless. Here the Church has both an opportunity and a responsibility. Too often the work of the Church is too largely held apart from the home. There is no co-operation between the two, therefore they cannot complement each other.

Several things will help to bring the home and the Church into closer fellowship. (1) The Church should set clearly before every home the true objectives of Christian service. Every parent is entitled to know what the organization in which the child is enrolled stands for and what its aims are. (2) The Church should seek to furnish the home with such religious literature as will best promote the spiritual life of the members in the home. This should not be done merely to sell denominational literature, but to furnish spiritual help. (3) The Church can help the home by carefully prepared lessons for home study for the child. Many parents are finding great personal help in reviewing with their children the great fundamental truths of Christian living embodied in such lessons. It is one way of requickening the religious life and thought in the home. (4) The Church can help by offering special courses for parents. Such helps are greatly prized by many parents and are exerting a great influence in the building of better and more spiritual homes. Often parents are not nearly as unwilling as they are uninformed. (5) The Church can assist the home by preparing special gatherings for mutual fellowship. Parents and Teachers Associations have done a great deal to bring the home and the public school closer together, why should not the same principle be applied in the work of religious development? (6) Some churches are finding special home visitors a great help. Often someone in the congregation is employed for such service. Through these contacts the help of the Church can be brought more fully to every home. (7) The Church should definitely enlist the assistance of the home. Every home should be frankly approached with the definite request to share with the Church in the religious development of the child. To do this most effectively a program of co-operation should be worked out setting forth how these two agencies can complement each other in this effort. The fact should be frankly faced that without the home the Church is inefficient, and without the Church the home is incomplete.

But all this presents the fact that the Church must also give more thoughtful attention to the building of a spiritual environment through worship in the Church itself. Many agencies in the Church dealing with child life fail primarily because they produce exercises rather than worship. In many churches the teaching ministry is preceded and followed by opening and closing exercises. This affects especially the work with children. It takes worship to call out the finest spiritual responses of a life. Unless there is worship, there can be no real vital spiritual environment in the Church. Altogether too little attention has been given to this all important fact. People often wonder why there is so little spiritual appreciation, but fail to note the sad lack of real worship in the Church. This affects all phases of Church work, but most seriously hinders the work of evangelism among children.

In building worship into the program of the Church, two things should be especially observed. First, children should be trained in worship. This can best be done in their natural groups. In each department there should be a program of training which seeks to initiate the child into the act of worship. Such training implies instruction in the elements of worship, but also participation in the act of worship. The essential character of worship is the quickening of the sense of God in the life, and the bringing of the will of the individual into harmony with the will of God. Worship is thus a fundamental exercise in the development of the spiritual life. Second, children should be led to worship with others. While the training can best be given in the separate group, the act of worship can only be made supremely meaningful if there is participation with the larger group. There is a tendency today to separate children too largely from the congregational worship and thus deprive them of one of the most needed helps in the building of the spiritual life. It is of course true that sometimes there is very little of worship in the general assembly of Church people and very little which really comes within the range of the interest and understanding of the child, but this is no argument against the need of the child. The fact that adults fail does not deny the spiritual value of united worship. The recognition of such a failure should lead to a more determined effort to make worship a vital factor in all the work of the Church. Children need the helpful influence of the worship with adults. When they are denied this privilege, they are deprived of a most helpful agency for spiritual growth and life. There should be opportunity in every church for united worship which includes young and old. Unless the Church will build a spiritual environment around the child through worship, the work of evangelism will be greatly hindered.

Third, there must be a moral appeal which grounds religion in moral living. If religion is to have a vital place in the life of the child it must not be stripped of moral content. Very early in life a child normally recognizes moral distinctions and is moved by moral urges. Children soon learn to live a moral life in relationship with their parents. They soon discover that this relationship implies more than association and sharing in certain goods, that it implies personal integrity. But it is not long before there is a sense of frequent rupture in this finer relationship which can only be restored if there is penitence and forgiveness. The reason for that is because the relationship is personal. Just so the child will soon discover that its relationship with God implies a moral integrity which is possible only on the basis of forgiveness. It is a false teaching only too often heralded abroad today that a child does not need forgiveness. Many, of course, set forgiveness into the category of the prodigal who has wasted himself in a far country, and thus set up an unwarranted antithesis. But forgiveness is not only for the prodigal son in the far country, it is for every one who would live a life of moral integrity. To deny this to the child is to take its religion out of the realm of the moral into that of doubtful value. Whenever religion is divorced from the moral it is stripped of its true character and power. As before indicated, this fact makes it doubly necessary that those who teach children have a rich experience of Christian fellowship out of which they can guide the child into a right personal relationship with God.

Fourth, there must be an opportunity for personal decision and commitment. This again can often best be accomplished in the natural grouping. There is a naturalness, a freedom and a reality in this realm which is hard to match elsewhere. It is a doubtful practice to urge children too strongly outside of their normal sphere of life. They can quite easily be led to make a decision, but while some good comes out of this, there is often much harm resulting from such pressure. Such opportunity should go naturally with the presentation of the truth. In every lesson there is something which may make a special appeal to some life. The wise teacher will carefully note the impression of the lesson and use the opportunity to lead to a commitment of life. One reason why this is often overlooked is that some teachers do not think that to be their specific task. Sometimes too the immaturity of the leaders intimidates them to follow up the truth to its rightful claim. There is great need of more attention to this all important work. But there is also value in group decision and action. If special times are set aside and the children prepared, a decision day may become a great blessing. Such an opportunity makes possible group influence and also public confession in a larger way. It also furnishes opportunity for those who have in the past taken their stand for Christ to reaffirm their dedication and take advance steps in the Christian life. There is great value in such group appeals if carefully made.

2. THE FIELD OF YOUTH

Youth is not merely the extension of childhood, but the time of the awakening of new life impulses. These new urgencies make the period of youth one of stress and storm, and the work with youth often very difficult. While it is true that the work with youth is difficult, it is equally true that the work with youth is most rewarding. There is no period of life which presents greater opportunities for real leadership and constructive building than does the period of youth. Merely to see the problems, is to see one side of life. All this applies to evangelism as well as to any other approach to youth.

The appearances of new life impulses furnish the most normal and effective way of approach to youth. This of course suggests that youth can neither be dealt with as children nor as adults. The period of childhood has been outgrown, the period of maturity has not yet been reached. Youth has its own unique interests and needs its own life. These interests are the key by which one can unlock the life and look into the deeper meanings of an unfolding soul. They are also the means by which one can lead youth into an expanding and enriching experience of reality. They furnish the points of contact through which an understanding leader can bring youth and God into a meaningful and satisfying comradeship. While it may seem at times that youth is indifferent to the religious appeal, yet it is true that in no other period of life is the human soul more earnestly seeking for, nor more sincerely responsive to, the comradeship of God. This fact is often overlooked, but is basic to all work with young people.

When the first psychological study of religious experience was made it was discovered that a significant high peak of religious interest and responsiveness comes at about the age of 15 or 16. Fuller study has proven that this is not the only time when there is such a peak of interest, nor even that of the greatest possibility of eliciting a response, yet the fact remains that youth is preeminently a religious opportunity. If youth is not vitally interested in religion, one of two things has happened: Either the normal impulses of youth are misdirected and overstimulated with other things, or the religious appeal lacks reality and has become formal and stereotyped. Whenever religion moves in the realm of the normal life it has a tremendous appeal to youth.

It is evident therefore that the work of evangelism among young people must center in the interests of youth. It is futile to try to impose religion upon anyone, but it is most futile in the efforts to win young people. Only too often one finds young people who at one time accepted religious ideas and ideals and entered certain religious practices, but who never came into an experience of reality, and now have largely lost interest in religion. Their religious life did not strike deeply into reality in their own lives. Such a religious life has little permanency and, of course, brings no abiding satisfaction. It is at least a fair question whether the reason why so many adolescents are lost for Christ and the Church, is not due to the fact that they have not been led into a religious experience which is normal and real in the terms of their own lives? The Church has not always been efficient in leading people into an experience of salvation which is real and vital in terms of life. Such a reality is possible, if the religious appeal is made along the lines of the basic interests of youth.

Possibly someone asks, "Have young people any interests? Are they interested in vital things? Can their interests be used religiously?" These are important questions and deserve a thoughtful answer. It is true that in the intensely complex life of the present time, with its many pleasure agencies there is often an overstimulation of life which tends to divert it from real interests and makes young people superficial and unresponsive to the appeals of the more serious and fundamental things. Yet this same tendency is found in adult life as well, and if on this ground it should be concluded that youth has no vital interests, then the same judgment must also pass upon adults. Again, what seem to be the interests of youth are, after all, often only superficial expressions and not really true to the deeper yearnings of life. One must look deeper than the surface to discover the real issues of life. To judge youth by what lies on the surface is just as dangerous as thus to judge adults. One must seek for the inner urgencies of life to discover interest. Neither is the standard of interest always dependable. Oft times the interest of youth is judged by adult standards, and because young people do not become interested in what older people want them to be interested in, the conclusion is that they are not interested in vital things. But the question naturally arises, are the things people want youth to be interested in, vital things? Are adults interested in vital things? Life always tends to become static and formal, and there is danger that people think they are interested in worth while things when they are spending their time and energy on mere trifles. It is needful to ask what is interest in vital things before one can answer the above questions fully.

If one carefully studies the life of young people it becomes evident that the major interests center in individual self-realization. Youth is the period of life when more than any other time there is an urgency for self-assertion and self-realization. This may sometimes lead to wrong attitudes and life expressions, but it is none-the-less vital for character building and useful service. There are in general three aspects of this self-realization.

First, there is the urgency to search into the mystery and meaning of selfhood. This marks early adolescence and finds expression in the efforts to make new discoveries, enter into new group relationships, and express life in terms of the practical ways of living. Here there is a great opportunity for evangelism, for where can the deeper meanings of life be more fully discovered that in a life of comradeship with Jesus? He has made all of life worth while, and if one can help youth see the Christ in the manliness of his personality, he can help them greatly in their efforts to understand the meaning of selfhood.

Second, there is an inner adjustment of life, which is characteristic of middle adolescence. The first stages of physical growth are over, and now the time for the building of new forces into an organized life has come. This interest finds expression in the effort to emancipate life from external authority, the effort to fix the standards of faith and conduct, and the effort to make adjustment to the larger social interests of life. This, too, has great evangelistic value for this interest in the higher ways of living can find no greater satisfaction than is found in that way of life which Jesus helps man to live.

③ Third, there is the interest in harnessing life's resources to the great world task. This characterizes later adolescence and expresses itself in the effort to prepare for life's work, to find one's place in the world work, and to enter into those relationships which will be most helpful in the working out of life's responsibility. This, too, has great religious significance. For the Christian life is more than merely gathering for one's self; it is giving in service for others, and nowhere can life find such a satisfying expression as in such a self-giving service with Jesus Christ in the interest of human redemption.

If youth is to be won for Christ and His Church, there must be an evangelistic appeal to youth which strikes deeply into real life. Not creed, nor doctrine, but vital experience makes the greatest appeal to youth. There must also be the vindication of the Christian principle in life. Nothing will persuade youth more easily than principle expressed in life. In the appeal to youth there must be a note of heroism in every challenge. Youth will not readily respond to an appeal which does not have in it the element of the heroic. Youth is the period of heroism and religion must take on this aspect if youth is to be enlisted. Then, last but not least, if evangelism of youth is to succeed there must be a sincere interest in the individual. Youth responds to those who are truly interested, those whose interest is not lessened by the reactions of a restless life, but abides through all the fitful changes of these significant years. What youth needs is more genuine friends and sympathetic helpers. Such persons have great influence with young people. Youth needs more people who love so fully that they can think with young people, feel with them, struggle with, and live with them in such a sincere friendship that through their comradeship they may be led to the greatest friend—even Jesus Christ. The field of youth is a most promising field for evangelism if it will only be properly worked.

Such an approach to youth implies several things. First, there must be a meaningful spiritual atmosphere. Just as in the evangelism of childhood, atmosphere is essential, so in bringing the Gospel to young people special attention must be given to the building of a challenging environment. Two aspects of this are of great importance.

There should be the creation of an environment through consistent purposeful living. Young people are apt to be too critical, but they are deeply sensitive to the inconsistencies of those who profess to follow Christ and live the higher life. While children are sensitive, they do not have the same power of critical determination which youth has. There is no period of life when example may be more helpful or harmful than this period of youth. The Church should give most careful attention to the building of an environment through Christian living.

There should be wholesome worship. There are certain reactions of youth which make worship more difficult. Youth presents natural reserves, there is a shrinking from sentiment, there is a tendency to question the mystical, there is often considerable impatience with existing forms of worship, and there is an urgency for the practical, yet underneath there is in every young life a longing for true worship, and a response to a meaningful worship act. It is, therefore, best especially for training in worship if young people can have their own worship services, yet they should not be wholly shut off from the worship of adults. There are values in united worship in the congregation which cannot be secured in specialized group worship. Youth needs the contact with the larger group in its worship. Possibly there has not been enough attention given to the furnishing of youth with meaningful worship for an evangelistic appeal. Around youth there should be built an atmosphere vibrant with spiritual power through worship.

There should be an approach to the life through a graded Gospel appeal. There is only one Gospel, just as there is only one evangelism, but this Gospel is so large and so rich that it applies to all of life. People must learn to use the Gospel as it relates to life; such adaptation implies several things: First, it implies an adaptation of the truth to the intellectual capacity of the life. It should be such that it will come within the range of the grasp of the mind, and thus form the basis for an intelligent, meaningful and personal response to God. Second, it implies the recognition of the normal religious crises in life. There are times when the life is peculiarly ready for some great saving truth. If properly presented the life will readily respond and there will follow a normal life of saving fellowship. Much teaching lacks this approach, and is therefore not as effective as it should be. Third, it implies the furnishing of the life with a reasonable ground for belief. This is of greatest importance in the period of youth. Youth often assumes a critical attitude and seems ready to question everything. Young people demand a reason for the faith. This normal craving should not be quenched, but rather given proper recognition. There is a reasonable ground for the Christian faith. The Apostle has well said that the Church does not follow cunningly devised fables when she makes known the will of God. She has a valid reason for her faith and she should share with youth this reason for faith. This may mean patience, it may mean waiting for results, it may at times mean seeming defeat, but it will mean a meaningful religious life. Young people are yearning for reality, it is the privilege of the Church to help them find such reality.

There should be an adequate opportunity for the personalizing of religious experience. No experience ever becomes really vital, worth while and satisfying in a life until it becomes personalized. Religion remains merely a social theory or a group ideal until it becomes personalized in the life. To personalize religion youth must be permitted to live its religious convictions normally and freely. This implies that youth be given a part in the planning and carrying out of the religious program of the Church. In the past too often youth was expected to be religious, but their religion was so limited that it could not really be good for anything. The natural result was that many became tired of being religious for no special purpose, and turned to other interests only to suffer spiritually. Many were lost for Christ and the Church. The great leakage in the Church has been during the period of youth, largely because the Church did not know how to help youth. Many young people failed to find an opportunity to personalize their own religious experience and therefore lacked interest. Such personalizing of religion must imply a definite personal experience of God in the life, growing daily more meaningful through a life of Christian service. This does not mean that adults should not help youth. Young people need such help, but it means that the religious life of youth must be such as represents reality in their own thought and life.

There should be a definite culture in the way of Christian living. Evangelism has too often lingered at the door which leads into the Christian life and failed to lead on those who have entered. The door is indeed beautiful, but to linger there to admire it and never get farther on in the way of Christian living, means inefficient living; youth is often led through the door, then left standing without any guidance and help. Evangelism is more than leading people through the gate, it is also the development of the Christian life. This implies that there should be definite instruction in Christian living. In a gathering of several hundred Christian men and women the question was asked how many had been led to Christ through special evangelistic meetings, and about eighty-five per cent said that they had been initiated into the Christian life through such efforts. But when the question was asked how many had received training in Christian living after they had entered the Christian life, not more than one per cent signified that they had received such help. More attention must be given to this in order that the Christian life may be unfolded in its beauty and power. Such instruction may take on the nature of special classes, prayer meetings, discussion groups, classes in Sunday School, pastor's classes, and through special literature. The method must be worked out according to the need, but the help should be given.

Again, there should be the development of the Christian life through the enlistment of the life in the service activities of the Church. It is true that not all of the Christian life is service, but it is true that unless people are initiated into service activities they will soon lose their interest in the Church. In the development of the Christian life there should also be a clear setting forth of the growing conception of the Kingdom of God. Through Christian living the Kingdom is to be realized among men, but such living becomes ever more and more inclusive. Possibly some people see so little in the Christian life because they have never thought of it except in terms of an emotional experience. In the development of the Christian life the enlistment of special workers has its place and importance. Not everyone is called to be a special worker in the sense that he or she will devote all the time and energy to Christian service, but God is calling some people to such life commitment. It is worth much to a church to call forth certain workers for the ministry or missionary work, or some other forms of full time Christian service. Such dedication of life tends to enrich the life of the whole church. It adds to the significance of Christian living, and should not be neglected.

There is yet one other aspect of this field which should be noted. Youth is not only a great opportunity for spiritual harvesting, but presents a great force for efficient evangelistic work. The enlistment of youth in evangelism is an important aspect of the development of the field. In this there is a great power for the Church. In all the movements which make for progress, the vision, strength and consecration of youth are essential elements. The strength of youth harnessed to any great task means progress. Without the co-operation of youth there is no permanent advance. Any movement which fails to enlist the young people cannot endure. In each succeeding generation of young people, lies the power for larger living and a better social order. Through youth, activity is renewed; enthusiasm rekindled; optimism recaptured; purpose reaffirmed; strength refurnished, and adventurous living reenacted. Youth holds the key with which to unlock new doors of opportunity and usher in a better day. Furnished with the best in the past as a noble heritage, youth has the opportunity and the responsibility of building a better world.

A great task faces the Church of today. No one has defined this fully. The more one seeks to understand it, the more complex and inclusive it is seen to be. But this task presses in upon the Church with a new urgency. It calls for a larger ministry and a more efficient service. This task implies the establishment of greater economic justice; the creation of a better social fellowship; the building of racial and international relationships upon more equitable foundations; the release of the spirit of co-operation for a more efficient spiritual ministry and the cultivation of the spirit of good-will and brotherliness among all peoples. But there is one aspect of this task which is more fundamental than any of these, or all of these. The task of the Church is primarily the release of moral and spiritual power in this world. Unless there will be an undergirding of the moral and the spiritual all the mighty accomplishments of recent times will turn to the hurt of mankind and these other gains will be impossible. There is much power in man's possession today—too much unless he becomes more efficient morally and spiritually. The greatest need of the world at this hour is more moral and spiritual power. This is the supreme duty of the Church;

unless she releases moral and spiritual power she fails in her task.

The Church is now rallying her forces for a great moral and spiritual advance. The major emphasis is placed upon evangelism. The whole Church is called upon to put forth special efforts to lead people to Christ. This urgency implies a particular call to the youth of the Church. Unless the youth of the Church will fall into line, this movement will fail to be what it should be. During the past the young people have accredited themselves nobly by their loyal support of the larger program of the Church. They have built up a great organization, they have gathered large sums of money, and they have furnished splendid leadership, but the greatest opportunity is facing them in this call to a spiritual advance. All around them there is confusion and uncertainty. There are giants of evil stalking about in the land. The securities in which men trusted in the past failed to stand the test of war, and the world is today groping blindly for light and life. Everywhere there is an evident need of a spiritual revival. Thousands and millions are literally without God and without hope. They need to be brought to the Christ who is the Saviour, "abundantly able to save." But not only is there need of bringing the individual to Christ, there is also need of bringing all of human relationships under the dominance of the Christ. He is the one security which will not fail. This service the Church can render, for she has this message of the Christ, a message of hope and salvation. If the Church will render this service she will prove herself the agency of the Spirit in an hour when a spiritual ministry is most needed. This is the opportunity which confronts the youth of today. Will youth respond to the call?

Sometimes young people feel hesitant about participating in the work of evangelism, because they look upon this as the work of the elders in the Church, of officials, or specialists. They are ready enough to respond to other calls, but feel that they are disqualified for this finer Christian service. It is well to face the fact that to engage in the work of evangelism one must think seriously of what is implied. No one can be efficient in the work who is careless in either effort or life. It is essential that one first experience in his own life what he would lead others to experience. Vital Christian experience and Christian living are essentials for evangelism. But it is a wholly false conception that evangelism is the work of specialists, and that young people have no part in the work. It is true in this as in every other movement, that unless youth is in the movement, its results will not be what they should be.

Young people can influence others in matters of social ideals, home ideals, business choices, and in many other ways, but they can also influence others religiously. Just as they can lead others in matters of daily life, so they can lead others to Jesus Christ. Many are doing this and finding greatest joy in this service. All can use their contacts, their friendships, their fellowships, their organizations, to lead others to Christ. Young people can do much to determine the standards of life, and they have also the opportunity to lead others to bring their lives and all their relationships under the Lordship of Jesus. Young people can also engage in the ministry of prayer, which is one of the greatest evangelizing forces. In many ways young people can help in this great spiritual advance.

3. THE FIELD OF ADULT LIFE

In the past much interest was focalized upon the evangelism of adult life. Most of the methods of evangelism were built with the view of calling forth the response of adults. The value of every evangelistic effort was largely determined by the number of adults reached and won. In more recent times the interest has turned from the adults to that of childhood and youth, with the result that in many churches there is very little done by way of reaching adults. Such a shifting of viewpoints does not however make less urgent the field of adult life for evangelistic efforts. This field calls for much purposeful and constructive evangelism. There are multitudes of people who are without Christ and the Church who need to be more definitely included in the evangelistic outreach of the Church. This field presents many problems, difficulties and discouragements, and has not been, nor is today, as fruitful as the field of childhood and youth, but, however difficult, it must not be neglected. If rightly worked it will also bring forth blessed results.

There are several things which make the work of evangelism among adults very difficult.

First, the sphere of adult life has as yet not been very clearly charted. Much attention has been given to the study of the psychology of childhood and youth, and these fields are today quite fully charted, but very little attention has been given to this study in the field of adult life. This is especially true when it applies to the religious aspect of the life.

Second, there are comparatively few agencies which make adequate contact with adult life for religious influence and impact. The Sunday Schools and the Women's organizations have rendered a great service in this field, but apart from these there are few agencies which have spiritualizing contacts.

Third, in adult life the period of ready responsiveness to the religious appeal has already largely passed. There are comparatively few conversions during this period when compared with the period of childhood and youth. Choices have largely been made, ideals fixed, and forms of action established. Even when there is the mind to change there are so many limiting relationships that new adjustments are less easily achieved.

Fourth, this period also marks the time of added responsibilities and multiplied duties. It is the time of special burden-bearing. This calls for concentration of thought and conservation of energy. All this means that there is a tendency for adults to become preoccupied with the temporal and material things, to the exclusion of the things that are spiritual and eternal. This makes the spiritual approach most difficult.

Fifth, adult life is also the period of many disillusionments and disappointments. The day dreams of youth often fail to come true, the course chosen for life grows more and more difficult, the problems of life multiply and the fondest hopes seem to fade without the realization of the desired good. These experiences bring heart-ache, and sometimes lead to serious questionings, doubts and pessimism. Many people find it hard to believe in justice and righteousness because they seem to see so little justice and righteousness in their environment and relationships. Life often seems a very hard road to travel, the world seems most unfriendly and the desired good moving farther and farther away. These experiences often close the life against the religious appeal and make the work of evangelism most difficult.

But adults need to be evangelized. The work is more difficult but not impossible. There are barriers in the way, but these are not insurmountable, the desired reactions are more difficult to secure, but adults will respond if properly approached. All this places a definite responsibility upon the Church which she dare not evade. While there is great urgency today to bring the Gospel appeal through a better teaching ministry to childhood and youth, there must be no abating in the effort to win adults. This effort also needs to be carefully studied and related. The former mass-appeals no longer prove successful and new forms of contact and appeal need to be found. While adult life is far more complex than that of childhood and youth, this only reinforces the need of a constructive and aggressive evangelism for adults. Those who stand in this period of life need Jesus Christ, they need his presence and strengthening in their lives, they need his idealism and courage, but they need his saving grace and power. The fact that this field is more difficult is no valid reason for discouragement and relaxation of effort.

In the work of evangelism among adults, there are several elements which deserve special consideration.

First, the religious approach to adult life should always be sympathetic. There may be much in the life of the adult which is trying and needs to be rejected firmly, but the most successful approach is ever that which is sympathetic. Adults carry great loads and battle against many discouragements, and sometimes their experiences tend to embitter them and cause the rougher side of life to appear. Sometimes there is a seeming indifference when in reality underneath there is a great longing for the understanding heart and the helping hand. He who would win adults to Christ should develop the capacity for great sympathy.

Second, the religious appeal to adults should be vitally related to the interests of life. One of the greatest urges which drives adults on with almost irresistible force is the desire of achievement. This urge has great value for the religious appeal and offers a splendid contact for the Gospel message. Jesus comes to help men achieve. He makes possible the greatest achievement. He reinforces the life when otherwise there would be weakening and fainting. Jesus is the helper adults need in their struggles of life.

Third, special attention should be given to the making of contacts with adult life. Most adults who are won for Christ are first brought into some contact with a spiritualizing group. Organizations of men and women have proven most helpful as agencies for contact. The Church needs to give more attention to the adequate organization of adult life for evangelistic gain. In too many churches this is almost wholly neglected. Only a few churches have Women's groups which are really giving themselves to making contacts for Christ and the Church. Still fewer have such organizations for men. In many communities there are lacking virile expressions of religion in terms of adequate buildings, courageous community service, and wholehearted effort to apply the principles of Jesus. Where these things are lacking there is a weakened evangelism among adults.

Fourth, special efforts should be made to bring the Gospel appeal directly to the adults in the community. This may sometimes be done through the revival meeting, sometimes through Bible classes and kindred organizations. It can often be done most effectively through personal visitation. In the quiet of a man's own home or office, or place of work, one can make the very best appeal. It is really remarkable how readily adults respond when thus approached naturally and frankly about their relationship to Christ and his Church. Whatever the particular manner of approach it should always be done carefully and prayerfully in full reliance upon the leadership of the Holy Spirit. The appeal should be wholly lifted above any personal or group relationship. It should be a direct appeal to the life to respond to the claims of Jesus Christ in terms of a full surrender to Christ and a wholehearted espousal of his cause. The particular Christian group to which such a person may come afterward in terms of membership, should never enter into the appeal as such. It is not the primary concern to win a person to this or that church, but to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.

Fifth, the appeal should be made frankly with full opportunity of the individual to raise questions and face the issue. To lead people to Christ is more important than to bring them to the recording of a decision. There must be the full consent of the will or the decision will not be truly valid. That means an opportunity to face fully all the issues of such a decision.

In the field of adult life there are three areas which present distinct challenges for evangelism.

There is the area of adult life which is related to the Church but not yet won for Christ. In every church there are men and women who are brought into relationship through the organizations and service outreaches. Many of these are very friendly to the Church and ready to assist in various ways in carrying out the program of the Church. These present a prepared field for definite evangelistic appeal, although sometimes they respond slowly to the more spiritual appeal. The best way to reach these is through the contacts already made. The Church should not be satisfied in merely interesting these people and eliciting their help, but should definitely plan and pray for their initiation into that spiritual experience which can come only through a wholehearted yielding to God. The goal of the evangelistic church must ever be the leading of the individual into a life of saving fellowship with God through Jesus Christ. This area is the most easily approached but too often neglected.

Second, There is the area of adult life which has become almost wholly separated from the Church. This is a large area in most communities. It might be interesting if one were to ask why people withhold themselves from the Church. It is much easier to criticise such people than it is sympathetically to find out the reason why the Church seems to have so little meaning and appeal for them. In almost every community there are people who in the past were in the Church, or at least connected with the Church, but who through some experience were turned away. Often the real cause seems trifling, but the offense is felt most deeply. Then there are people who become so absorbed in the social and commercial life that while they hold a friendly attitude toward the

Church, they have no time for the service and work of the Church. They are preoccupied with other things. There are yet other people who are heavily pressed down with the burden of life and are looking for some agency through which they may find relief, but feel the Church offers them no help, therefore they are not interested. Some even feel the Church cannot help them. Still others seemingly have lost the sense of the spiritual and are therefore indifferent to the higher life presented by the Church. This area is a most difficult one to occupy. It has been largely passed by in most of the evangelistic efforts. The appeals made have brought forth little result. Yet these people need to be won for Christ. Two things seem to be especially needed. First, there must be a most sympathetic approach to such people. If one can enter their lives sympathetically they will be led to a spiritual response. Second, this field calls for a more united evangelism among the various churches. No one church can occupy this area alone. Here is where co-operative evangelism will be most helpful.

Third, There is the area of adult life which is limited through temporary and permanent handicaps. In every community there are suffering ones and people who are sick. Some of these are in their own homes, others in hospitals, others in special homes. It is a sad fact that these are only too often sadly neglected. Many of the hospitals and homes are almost wholly neglected in the programs of evangelism, yet these persons often present a great opportunity. This work can best be done through a community effort of the churches. This is an area too large for any one church.

Fourth, there is the area of adult life which is marked by race, color and nationality. In almost every community there are people who because of race, color or nationality feel themselves shut out of the church life. Sometimes there are only a few families in a community, sometimes the number is quite large. This area is especially significant in many of the American cities. Large sections in these centers of population are more and more deserted by the churches and filled with foreigners. Here is a field of childhood, youth and adult which is urgently calling for a more aggressive evangelism. Some approaches are made but there should be a more aggressive work done in all our cities. This area calls for real statesmanlike leadership. If a greater unity of Protestant forces could be achieved, a greater work could be done in these neglected areas.

There is great need that the Church requicken her sense of responsibility toward adult life. While it is true that adult life presents a much harder field, it is not true that the field is unfruitful. If the Church will intelligently and wholeheartedly give herself to the task of winning men and women to Christ she will not fail. An aggressive, spirit-filled leadership will be able to bring about a revival among adults. There is danger that with the great emphasis placed upon religious education today, this field be too much neglected. This area presents a real challenge to every Church.

THE WORLD FIELD OF EVANGELISM

All that has been said applies to this field, yet there is a sense in which this presents its own unique problems. The Church is not only responsible for those who are in the Church community and in the nation in which the particular Church may be established, but Jesus lifted the task to its largest challenge when he said, "The field is the world"[4] This conception should never be lost sight of. There is a task of world evangelism. Not until all men everywhere are brought under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, can the Church rest in her onward march. Three things are implied in this effort. First, there should be a program of evangelism which is inclusive enough to include the whole world of humanity. Second, there should be a definite effort to release workers who will carry the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Too often recruiting for world-evangelism is not stressed as it should be. Without such a release of consecrated workers there can be no true progress in this great work. Third, there should also be a definite effort to release the needed funds to make possible world-evangelism. It is not enough to pray, to bear personal testimony, but there must also be a loyal support making possible a larger program of evangelism both at home and abroad.

good [illegible]

In recent years there have been many disturbances in this effort of world-evangelism and there has been a tendency to lose interest and turn aside from this great task. The revival of interest in national religions has raised the question of the need of bringing Christ to all men, and some have come to the conclusion that the world really does not need the Gospel. This, however, is a false conclusion. While one should gladly recognize the good in all peoples and in all religious systems, it yet remains that there is salvation in none other save Jesus Christ. The world needs Christ and it is our duty to give Him to the world. Christ is not a luxury but a necessity. The Christian religion is not an enjoyment but a responsibility. Those who have come to know Christ must bring him to others. The command of Christ is Go, bear witness unto the uttermost parts of the earth and bring the good news to all men. The world is the field for evangelism.

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[4] Matt. 13 : 38.

CHAPTER IX

THE CHALLENGE OF EVANGELISM

THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE CHALLENGE

VITAL evangelism consists not in an adequate definition, important as that is; nor in better methods, helpful as these are; nor in a clear charting of the field, necessary as this is, but in a full and wholehearted acceptance of the great commission of Jesus to go and make disciples of all nations. Such acceptance must ever issue forth out of an inner sense of urgency resulting from a personal experience of saving fellowship with God through Jesus Christ. When the heart is constrained by the love of Christ, the life moves readily in the path of loving solicitude for those who are without the blessings in Christ. Without a definite personal experience of salvation there will not be an acceptance of the challenge. It is of course true that some people who have come into such a personal experience have not as yet accepted the challenge. There may be several reasons for this, yet it remains true that where such an experience is lacking there is little response to the challenge of evangelism. Whatever the appeal, there must ever be the inner response to set the life into the path of greatest privilege and duty.

It should be clearly set forth that there is a challenge in evangelism. This work is not merely an obligation which Christians should asume but a service after which all men should earnestly strive. Evangelism is not a work of secondary importance, but one of supreme worth and ever enlarging enrichment. People may build great structures but these will crumble in course of time; they may amass great wealth but this will lose its value as the social order changes; they may achieve notable distinction and come to great fame and yet none of these things have abiding qualities, but when they give themselves to the work of evangelism they engage in a work which has eternal worth and brings the highest satisfactions. Surely to have a part in such a service carries with it a great challenge. People who fail to share in this work deny themselves the greatest privilege in life. If evangelism is to become really vital in the life of the Church, there must be a more wholehearted acceptance of this challenge by all believers.

The full import of this challenge can only be rightly appreciated if there is a correct understanding of the vital place which evangelism holds in the Christian religion. Christianity is primarily interested in the saving of life. Its basic teaching is that man is essentially a spiritual being. This gives to man a great worth and to every spiritual endeavor a supreme significance. Man is a spiritual entity, a spiritual asset in the universe and destined for greatest spiritual achievement. The spiritual life of man is therefore of foremost importance. While in the past there has been a tendency to divorce the spiritual from the physical, even to the point of the depreciation and neglect of the physical, today there is a tendency so to intermingle the spiritual and the physical that the spiritual loses much of its distinctiveness and significance. The physical has its rightful place in the Christian economy, yet it is after all only the medium through which the spiritual expresses itself. There is danger that too great identification of the two, results in serious confusion and spiritual loss. It may not be the truth most readily accepted by a materially minded generation, but the Christian teaching places first and greatest emphasis upon the spiritual. The primary concern is to save man spiritually. This is the heart of evangelism. It is that effort through which the Church seeks to call forth and strengthen the spiritual worth of a life. It means taking life out of the relationships of sin, and all spiritually limiting influences, and placing it into such a relationship with God that its spiritual quality may be disclosed and its spiritual worth enriched. When this basic truth is rejected, the heart of the Christian message is denied. The challenge of evangelism is the challenge to build the spiritual life and a spiritual world order. Several aspects of this challenge stand out in bold relief in Christian thought and life.

THE LIFE AND TEACHING OF JESUS

Spiritual life has found fullest expression in the person of Jesus. His message was one of spiritual emphasis, but his life was a constant and complete vindication of the truth he taught. The world has nothing better than the life of Jesus. His life means more than all science, all discoveries, all inventions, and all accumulations of material goods. In fact, if it were not for the life of Jesus many of these things would not exist today, and those which would be would have lesser value. He has been and today is the greatest inspirer of men, urging them to reach out boldly into the mysteries of nature and release hidden forces and place them under subjection to man. But he not only causes the release of the forces of nature, but he sets forth the principles governing their use. One of the most earnest searches of the present time is after the mind and spirit of Jesus in all of man's related life. Speaking of the influence of Jesus, Gandhi pays this tribute to him, "The man to whom India owes the most is the man whose feet never touched her soil."[1] In Jesus spirituality has received its fullest expression. But he not only revealed spiritual life, but is the source of such life. If then the Church is seeking to minister in spiritual things, she must go beyond his example to himself. She must claim him as the source of spiritual life. His own life is ever "the light of men,"[2] and the source of spiritual life. "Of his fullness we all received and grace for grace."[3]

The challenge of evangelism therefore roots itself first of all in the life of Jesus. We may with profit think of his attitude. Basically the evangelism of Jesus grounds itself in his sacrificial self-giving. He had life in him; he said he had power to keep it, he also had power to lay it down. This latter he chose to do. He gave himself that the world might be saved. This self-giving of Jesus forms the basic principle upon which all evangelism must ever be built. Unless evangelism strikes deeply into sacrificial living and self-giving, it is not true to Jesus and lacks winsomeness and redeeming power. But this self-giving was not only expressed in that supreme sacrifice which he made upon the cross, but characterized his whole life. In this there is a great significance. Evangelism implies sacrificial living. It means more than some one act of self-giving. Jesus' whole life was one of sacrificial self-giving. Three aspects of this life of self-giving on the part of Jesus have peculiar significance for evangelism and emphasize the challenge of evangelism.

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[1] Christian Evangelist, Nov. 10, 1927, pg. 1489.

[2] John 1:4.

[3] John 1:16.

A careful study of the life of Jesus reveals the fact that for Jesus evangelism was the identification of his life with the will of God. This was ever uppermost in his thought. In the wilderness, where great temptations presented themselves to him, he staked all upon the will of God.[4] When the disciples urged him to eat as he was talking to the woman of Samaria, he replied, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me and to accomplish his work."[5] Moffatt translates this as "my food," my sustaining nourishment, the resource of my life, is the will of God. He could not let anything separate him from this will. When asked what he conceived to be the will of God, he replied, to do his work. His first recorded words already imply such a supreme purpose, "I must be about my Father's business."[6] When asked what the work of God really is, he replied, "This is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."[7] It is very clear that Jesus thought of the Father as supremely interested in the work of human redemption, and that he felt he must share in this work through a full and complete identification of his life with the will of God. What dignity, what glory, what a challenge this brings to the work of evangelism. It is the work of supreme concern for God, the work into which he is pouring the richest fullness of his great love, the work which more than anything else discloses his Fatherly character and gives men confidence to come to him and trust in him in all the experiences of life. It is this purpose which men share through the work of evangelism.

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[4] Matt. 4: 1-11.

[5] John 4: 34.

[6] Luke 2: 49 (authorized version).

[7] John 6: 29.

It is also clear that for Jesus evangelism meant a sense of commission. He was the God-sent. He had received a commission from the Father. That commission implied a search after those who had strayed away from the Father's love and care. Speaking of this sense of commission he said "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which is lost."[8] This sense of commission marked his whole life. He could never evade this fact, but tested all things thereby. He was conscious that he was sent to make God known to men and to make operative in the lives of individuals and in all human relationships the will of God. When his disciples came to him with the news that certain Greeks who had come to the feast were seeking to see him, he turned aside as if he had not heard the announcement, saying, "The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified."[9] But the glory he was thinking about was not some recognition which these enquirers would bring to him, but the carrying out the commission of the Father for human redemption. For a moment it seems as if the impending crisis which he was facing in Jerusalem almost overwhelmed him, and turning to the Father he said, "Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father save me from this hour."[10] But hardly had these words fallen from his lips when the sense of commission again gripped him and he added, "But for this cause came I into this hour. Father glorify thy name."[11] Having thus reaffirmed his loyalty, there came to him the message of reassurance from the Father, and with full purpose of a life surrendered to the will of God he looked down through the centuries and said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto myself."[12] It was this sense of commission which placed him under an obligation so that he repeatedly said, "I must." His whole life was influenced by this. This sense of commission, however, he expects his followers to share with him. To the disciples, and through them to all men, he said, "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you."[13] This fact is too often overlooked by the followers of Christ. Many people want religion as a personal gain, but they do not want to be bound by a commission. This is why evangelism lags in many places. Too many professed followers of Christ want to share his blessings, but not his commission, but these cannot be separated. If any man would follow Jesus he must share this responsibility. The more such a sense of commission possesses and moves the believers, the more vital will be the work of evangelism. The challenge of evangelism implies a commission from the Father. This, as has been previously pointed out, is a challenge which comes to every one, not merely a few leaders and specialists.

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[8] Luke 19:10.

[9] John 12:23.

[10] John 12:27.

[11] John 12:27-28.

For Jesus the work of evangelism was a normal approach to life with a sincere spiritual concern. He did not think of this as something super-added to his regular mission, but rather something which characterized all his approaches to men. It was the way he approached men which made his evangelistic ministry so vital and worth while. Several things should be carefully noted.

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[12] John 12:32.

[13] John 20:21.

(1) He approached all men with the message that God is a forgiving Father. He met people with the glad announcement that God is ready to forgive the sinner. All about him he saw people who were living in sin. Some were but little conscious of the fact, others were condemned under the load of their own guilt. He did not argue sin, he refused to be drawn into discussions of the origin of sin, but he brought to men a great truth when he announced the willingness of God to forgive the sinner. This fact gives to Christianity a peculiar character as the religion of redemption. There is no other element in the Christian message which gives to Christianity greater uniqueness than this truth set forth by Jesus. In all other religions, whenever man sins he disqualifies himself for approach to God and must do something to merit the favor of God, but Jesus came brushing aside all such limitations announcing that all who have sinned may come to God and receive his forgiveness. In other religions the gods withdraw from sinful men, but the God whom Jesus revealed is seeking after the lost to win them from their ways of sinning into fellowship with himself. He goes out to seek men and offer them forgiveness. This forgiveness is not contingent upon any offering which man can bring, nor is it contingent upon any position one may hold, he offered forgiveness to the publicans as well as to the pharisees, but it rests upon a moral response of man to God. Whenever there is such a response the forgiving grace of God is available to all. It is well that we pause with this thought a moment. This is such a familiar truth that its significance is often overlooked. What a privilege to

bring to sinful men everywhere this truth that God forgives sin. That is what men need. They need other things, but they need forgiveness more than anything else. We who know this truth have a great responsibility to share this truth with others. What a challenge Jesus places upon his followers in his own attitude towards sinful men!

(2) Jesus also approached men with a confidence that they deeply desired a better life. He believed that in every life there was a longing for fellowship with God. He did not say that all would follow their better urgings, he knew that some loved darkness better than the light because their deeds were evil, yet he approached all with a confidence that there was something in their hearts which responded to his message. The externals may be rough, the expressions may seem to indicate indifference, yet Jesus believed that in every life there is a striving after a better life. This longing Jesus tried to call forth and meet with the promise of that better life. When he met a group of energetic fishermen he said unto them, If you will follow me I will make you fishers of men, and they immediately left all and followed him.[14] Passing a tax gatherer's booth one day he saw the dissatisfaction of soul and discerned the yearnings for a better life, and to Levi he said, "Follow me," and the books were closed, the old life left behind and a new fellowship established. When a sinful woman was brought to him he dispersed her accusers with a simple question, then said to this woman, I am not here to condemn you, go "sin no more."[15] The whole life of Jesus is marked by this confidence in that inner yearning for a better life.

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[14] Matt. 4:18-22.

[15] John 8:11.

At times it seems he used special means to awaken this sense, as when in the life of the paralytic past failures had almost discouraged him beyond the point of personal response, but Jesus stimulated faith and called forth a saving response. This fact, too, has often been overlooked in much of modern evangelism. Too often the Church has failed to make such an approach to life. Sometimes her theology interfered, sometimes she was intimidated by the attitude of people, sometimes she lacked simple faith. The result is that many people have not been led into the better life. It is really remarkable how ready many people are to respond if there is such an approach to the life. People who would repulse almost every other approach become very tender and responsive when they are made to see that Jesus wants to bring to them that which they have really wanted but little understood. What a challenge Jesus places upon all his followers in this normal approach to life with a faith in the response of the heart to the better life!

(3) Jesus was more concerned in his approach to men with life responses and life attitudes than he was with formal confessions. What he wanted was a different attitude toward God, toward men, and toward realities. He found people everywhere who had seemingly lost the sense of sonship, they had not an at-home feeling with God. They were seeking after the things which have only secondary value, they were not spiritually-minded, and they were lost. He came to find them and bring them back to God. He was willing to trust the confession if there was a true return of life. In the story of the prodigal son he pointed out how the father interrupted a carefully prepared confession and did not permit the prodigal to recite all he intended to say, but threw

his arms about him and welcomed him back into the home and father's care. The best confession which the prodigal could make was made when he arose and went to the Father. He might have sent home a nice statement of fact and purpose, but what the Father wanted was the return of the lost son. Confession has its place in the work of salvation, but unless there is a return to God the confession will mean little or nothing. Sometimes people sign cards of purpose, and even join the Church, but there is little change of life and little of evidence that there has been a return to God. Jesus was primarily interested in the return. That is the significant thing. All else is of no avail. Only as people return to God and assume new attitudes and enter new relationships is the work of evangelism really effective. Perhaps there has been too much emphasis upon confessions and not enough upon relationships in modern evangelism. It will not be amiss to restudy the attitude of Jesus with reference to this all-important fact. It avails little to increase numbers unless there will issue forth new attitudes and new responses. Here, too, the example of Jesus brings a great challenge to his followers.

In his teaching Jesus was ever and again placing the emphasis upon evangelism. As already indicated, he demanded that his followers share with him this great commission. When he left them he placed upon them the responsibility to carry on this work until the ends of the earth should be reached. As he had gone about to bear testimony of the Father's love and willingness to save, so he charged them to go and bear witness. When the disciples sought to elicit secrets from him about the future, he pointed out that these belong to the Father, but that to the believer there has been given the responsibility of being his witnesses unto the uttermost parts of the earth. As the early Christians thought of themselves in relationship to Christ they felt that to be a Christian was to be Christlike, and to be Christlike meant to go out as he did in the interest of lost souls and helping win the world to God. The record of the first few centuries is a wonderful testimony to the power of evangelism when carried out in the spirit of Jesus under the direction of the Holy Spirit. These early Christians accepted the commission of Jesus as urgent and went out bearing testimony. The Church needs to come anew under the challenge of the commission of Jesus. There are too many Christians who want to exercise the right of a selective acceptance of the teachings of Jesus. They want to be known as his followers without doing the things he commands. Especially when it comes to evangelism they seem to feel that it is optional whether or not they will follow Jesus. There are many things which in these recent years have been set forth as teachings of Jesus, some with greater clearness, others with less evidence. This searching after the mind and spirit of Jesus is most promising and should have the fullest support of all who believe in a better world, but it is sad that the plainest teaching of Jesus is so often overlooked in all this searching. Whatever else Jesus said, he did say that the believers should be witnesses for him. This he said so plainly that no one can mistake his meaning. Upon this rests all the other things he said. If this is not done the other things will avail little. Here the life of Jesus is a great challenge to his followers. Every one who would follow Jesus must accept the challenge of evangelism.

THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

The Christian movement has had a long history. During these centuries the truth of Christianity has had manifold verification in individual lives and in human relationships. This long look backwards gives one an opportunity to see some things in their proper relationship. One of these truths is that of the work of evangelism, and the responsibility of the believer. During these years various attempts have been made to spread Christianity and to make the Christian truth operative in world redemption. Sometimes compulsion was used and large numbers were added to the Church. Sometimes psychological movements were launched which caught many and thus increased the number counted in the Christian movement, but none of these efforts have really attached people to Christ and released spiritual power in the world. The one effort which has always released spiritual power in the Church and won people for Christ and the Church with greatest significance has been that of personal witnessing on the part of the believers. This has often been made more general through organization, but was largely personal. Whenever ministers surcharge their messages with a personal testimony of conscious saving fellowship with God; when teachers bear witness to the truth they teach, and Christians tell forth the truth of saving grace in word and practice, the Church is efficient in the winning of others for Christ. The method of Jesus is still the best. He called men to follow him in witness bearing and that method has never yet been surpassed by any other. History clearly evinces the fact that personal evangelism is the most fruitful method of winning others to Christ and releasing his spirit in the world.

Again, history clearly proves that whenever the Church is most active in the work of evangelism she is also most influential in all other lines of service. The Church has always been most influential and helpful when she was placing into the forefront of her endeavor the work of winning others for Christ. Whenever evangelism wanes in the Church, spirituality wanes, and when spirituality wanes the Church becomes weakened in all her efforts. It matters not how active the Church is, how much of life she holds under her control, unless she leads people to God, she fails in her supreme purpose. There have been times when the Church was practically supreme in her authority over all of life; when she dictated the policy of the State and determined the character of education; when she enjoyed almost undisputed control over all the agencies which deal with human conduct and welfare, and yet during some of these times she was the most impotent spiritually. She was spending her energy and time upon regulation when she should have been the minister of regeneration. There is danger that the Church become overloaded with many things and fail in doing the essential thing. The number of things the Church can do efficiently depends upon her measure of spirituality, and her spirituality depends upon her loyalty to Christ in the great work of evangelism. A Church that is not evangelistic, may be idealistic, may be encumbered with much serving, may gather large numbers, but lacks in spiritual influence and enrichment. The true measure of the Church is her ability to bring men and women to God and build them up in the Christian life. What availeth it if there are numbers gathered but no spiritual gains made. Other organizations gather numbers. Why should the Church be needed if she has no more vital ministry to perform?

This truth has great significance for the Church of the present time. Never before have so many things been related to the Church and so many movements tied up with the Church. The service activities of most of the churches of the present time reach far beyond anything dreamed of but ten years ago. Many of these activities have literally been thrust upon the Church, and she has not been in a position to reject them. The urgency placed upon the Church to vindicate her claim of redeeming power has caused her to interest herself in many added activities. The result is the agenda of the Church is literally overloaded with things to do. Pastors often find it difficult to find a Sunday which has not been preempted by some organization or movement as the day for special presentation and emphasis. Many pastors are driven hither and thither to attend committee meetings in the interest of some worthy cause or some special organization until many of them become strangers to their studies, and mere transmitters of ideas instead of real preachers of the Gospel. Many laymen are so occupied with these related interests that they have no time to attend the midweek prayer service and thus become spiritually deplete through constant giving without an opportunity to refurnish life. Many churches become so obligated to these other ministries that the resources for the spread of the Gospel and the work of vital evangelism are exhausted and the kingdom lags. No one who believes in the Church wishes the Church to be less useful than is possible. It is a great satisfaction that so many movements are today recognizing the Church and asking for her help. It is a great satisfaction to know that through her manifold ministries the Church is today reaching into larger areas of thought and life. Yet there is a searching fact which cannot be avoided. In view of all these things the Church does not seem to be really efficient in the most essential thing. She is not winning others to Christ as she should. She is failing to release moral and spiritual life as she should and as many good people wish she might. Is it possible that she has been encumbered with much serving and neglected the one thing needful? Many earnest students of the present time are being disturbed over this lack of effective spiritual ministry. Perhaps there is needed a pause in this busy life to wait at the sources of power! Perhaps there is the need of a recommitment to the fundamental thing. Perhaps the greatest service she can render is not in these manifold ministries, but in calling men and women back to God and helping them to find a new grip upon his power for true living and Christian witnessing. While the Church is more liberal today than ever before, the one thing she is hoarding in selfish enjoyment is her experience with God in daily living. She is not telling the world of what God means to her. This means spiritual impoverishment and a limited evangelism. The challenge of evangelism is the verdict of history. When the Church was genuinely evangelistic she was a spiritualizing force in the world. When she made evangelism a secondary activity, she became spiritually inefficient. The challenge of evangelism issues forth out of the history of the Church.

THE WORTH OF PERSONALITY

The life and teaching of Jesus and the history of the Church urge the believer to an aggressive evangelism, but the life of man adds a further urgency. As before indicated, evangelism is concerned with the spiritualizing of life. The spiritual worth of a life centers in the worth of personality. Personality sets men apart from all other forms of life on this earth. In body man holds a close relationship in many things to other living beings, but his personality sets him apart in his uniqueness. The Bible declares man to be the creature of a special creative act of God. Scientific research has given much thought to the kinship of man with other animals. But there still remains a vast chasm between the animal and man. The measure of that chasm is the personality of man. That fact sets him into very different relationships. He is a creature who thinks, feels and wills. He not only acts, but he reviews his own activities and passes moral judgment upon his actions. He is motivated by a sense of right and wrong, thus making moral distinctions and recognizing moral obligations. He holds certain relationships to the material world, but seeks for relationships which are of more abiding worth than anything this world offers. He finds his comradeship not in fellowship with the things of the earth, but with the supreme personality in the universe. He feels himself made for a higher life and is restless until he finds rest in God. He is a person and can find completion of his own life only in relationship with other personalities.

What personality is in its essential qualities demands a search in the realm of metaphysics which we cannot follow here, but what personality is in terms of worth we may indicate briefly. If we make inquiry in the realm of literature we have some evidence of the worth of personality. What an accumulation of the beautiful, the true and the good there is in literature. What a dreary world this would be without literature! But all literature is the expression of personality. Every book, every magazine, every page of literature was produced by some person. If we look into the realm of art we find the same evidence. All the beautiful pictures, the great paintings, the fine representations in sculpture are the works of personality. Through these we are permitted to look more deeply into that mystery which we call personality. In the realm of music we are again face to face with the work of personality. It is the power of personality which has caused tones to be blended into harmonies which cheer and bless the soul. What a wonderful enrichment music is! But music is possible only because there is the power of personality. If we look into the realm of science and note how personality searches out the hidden forces and makes them servants for human progress we have another evidence of its power and worth. If we look into the field of physical transformation it is again personality which has caused the valleys to be lifted up and the hills to be made low and the wilderness to blossom like a rose. Animals have roamed over wild expanses for many years, but not brought forth fruitful field nor charted nor built highways of travel. They have not released the gold, silver, brass, tin, gas and oil for the development of commerce. All this awaited the touch of the human personality. Everywhere about us we see evidences of the worth of personality in the marvelous transformations wrought in nature and the mighty release of forces which make for human uplift and enrichment.

If we turn to the realm of ideals we are again face to face with the worth of personality. Ideals call forth latent resources and lead to the creation of new realities. Ideals lift life out of monotony and project it into new ways of living. But it is personality which releases ideal. If we turn to the realm of abiding worth, personality again stands out in splendor. Personality is linked with God and has eternal existence. It should have eternal worth. It may have eternal value if properly related. This brings us to the very heart of the challenge of evangelism. It is the work of evangelism so to relate personality that throughout all the ages to come there will be increasing worth. If this is true then the converse is also true, that a personality not so related means eternal loss. This truth does not seem to stir the Church today as it did formerly, but it should stir those who believe in the higher values. There is danger that people fail in their true goal. There is danger that they forfeit their life. What a tragedy it must be for a life so marvelously endowed and so closely akin to God to live on throughout all eternity, constantly wasting the power and worth of personality. What a disappointment, and what suffering such an experience must carry with it. It seems easy for people today to try and ease their consciences by projecting some theory of the goodness of God as guarantee in making some adjustment for those who have failed here. We should however remember that God has given no such promise. He has declared this to be the day of salvation. He has charged his followers to go and make disciples of all the nations. If they neglect this they cannot hide behind some theory they have formulated. The worth of personality should challenge us to renewed efforts to win all to a life of saving fellowship with God through Jesus Christ. There is too much at stake to run the risk of a life being lost eternally. The measure of our opportunity will be the measure of responsibility. The worth of personality carries with it a great challenge for evangelism.

THE SOCIAL WORTH OF A SAVED LIFE

There is social enrichment through the saving grace in Christ. Apart from the life of Jesus the greatest value in this world is a saved individual. People must live together, but this is one of the most difficult things to accomplish. It is becoming increasingly more difficult as life becomes more complex. Many agencies have been called forth to make such living more possible, all of which have added some values, but increasingly it is becoming more clear, that the only sure foundation for mutual understanding and universal good will, is that of character. Organization has its limits, agreements often prove powerless, financial securities break under stress and strain, and some more secure foundation for social welfare must be found. Such a security must not only regulate the external life, but control and direct the motives, desires and impulses. Such a control of life comes through the saving grace of Jesus Christ in the heart and life of man. Jesus changes the heart of man and builds society into a new life through an inner spirit instead of an outward constraint. This gives to all relationships new meaning and stability. This brings to the social order a new security. Instead of building human relationships upon selfishness, they are thus built upon love and safeguarded by the principles of justice and righteousness. The goal of Christianity is the Kingdom of God. This kingdom means the reign of God in human hearts and human society. This reign must begin in the individual before it can become the rule of society. Thus Jesus roots a better social order in regenerated personality. The more people are brought into the experience of saving fellowship with God through Christ, the more will truth and righteousness be established in the world. The value of a saved individual is found in a new social security released in the community. If one were even thinking in terms of selfishness there would be an urgency to strengthen the forces of evangelism for social security. But if one can think of that nobler relationship where all will be brothers and each seek the welfare of others, then there comes an added challenge of evangelism.

Such a release of saved personality also means the heightening of all other values. The greatest scientific progress has always been made under the illumination of the Gospel of Christ. Material things have their greatest significance and most abiding value when they are used for the bringing about of spiritual achievement. Power is most worth while when used to produce character. Progress is most notable when it means the building of the Kingdom of God. God has set man into this world to subdue it, and master its forces. But it takes more than scientific skill to accomplish this. Only too often progress in scientific achievement has been accompanied by an enslavement of man. The very forces released have in turn become the powers which destroyed man. The reason for this is that it takes moral power to use the world as well as scientific skill to release forces.

Such moral power issues forth out of the redeeming grace of God in the heart. Thus while the work of evangelism is primarily the work of bringing the individual into a right relationship with God, this accomplishment has the greatest social value.

It must be acknowledged that in the past the social worth of a saved life has not always been as much in evidence as it should have been. This was due at times to the fact that Christianity was too largely thought of as a separatist movement and definitely held apart from the social life. The release of such personality in the related life was discouraged, and the sphere of influence limited. Yet even under such limited conditions there were some beautiful illustrations of the influence of a saved life. Homes were rebuilt, confidence was restored, communities were enriched, and new forces released for right and righteousness. Why should not this be carried into all the relationships of life? When this is done there will be revealed the fullest evidence of the transforming power of a saved life in the social complex. Then too in the past there have often been divisions within the Christian groups themselves. Christians often gave a very imperfect illustration of the regulating power of the saving grace in human relationships. There have been divisions, often hatreds, jealousies, enmities and strife among those who professed to be the followers of Christ. Two causes have brought this about. First, in many instances there was lacking the reality of saving grace. There were those in the Church who helped shape the program who had as yet not permitted Christ to become lord and master of their own lives. Second, there was often a mistaken zeal for Christ and his cause. Minor differences were magnified and made divisive and the greater realities neglected. Things in which Jesus has little interest were set forth as supreme evidences of loyalty to him, but those things for which he lived and died were set aside as of lesser value. Such confusion of values always brings forth wrong attitudes and causes divisions. These shortcomings however do not deny the worth of a saved life, rather they enforce the challenge of evangelism. The Church should not be satisfied with an evangelism which fails to produce personal regeneration, should lift all of her efforts above these divisive elements, and center them upon the basic facts in Christianity. The more Christian people become Christlike the more united they will be in spirit and the more their lives will serve as a leaven in human society. The greatest need of the world is a new release of saved personality in all of man's related life. Nothing will bring to the world greater security than such a spiritualizing power.

THE PRIVILEGE OF A WORTH WHILE SERVICE

To have a share in the work of evangelism means the privilege of participating in the most satisfying service. There is nothing which is more truly worthwhile than the winning of others for Christ and his Church. There are many mighty works of God in which man has the privilege of sharing in comradeship with God, but the most wonderful of all his works is that of human redemption. Through prayer, through teaching, through testimony, through giving, and through many other forms of personal activity man may help God in the winning of others and enlisting them in the work of the spiritual rebuilding of the world. Anyone who has a true estimate of the real worth of a life cannot fail to appreciate the privilege of helping life to find its adjustment so that there will be an ever increasing release of the powers of personality, and an ever enlarging influence and power. A minister after leaving a field of labor where he had been shown many kindnesses and received many expressions of appreciation, received a letter from a little girl, a member of a less fortunate family in the congregation, in which she expressed her appreciation of the work of the pastor in these words, "You led me to Jesus." With tears in his eyes the pastor commented on this letter, saying: "If that were all I accomplished during the years of my pastorate in that community, it would be a most satisfying service." It was not all he accomplished, for his ministry was crowned with many lives led to Christ, but the joy of one life saved seemed to be an ample reward. It is a sad fact that many Christians have as yet not come into this joy, for without this their lives are lacking. There is no joy comparable with that of being consciously used of God to lead others to Christ. Of Jesus it is said, "Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising shame and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."[16] That joy was not a mere personal gain, but the consciousness that he was helping men to find God and find life in God. In setting forth the experiences of the suffering servant the prophet Isaiah said "He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied."[17] But this would only be possible because his soul is made an offering for sin. This joy should also be the joy of all Christians. For the joy set before them they should gladly give themselves to the work of evangelism.

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[16] Heb. 12: 2.

[17] Isaiah 53: 11.

There is, however, another aspect of this privilege. Not only does it bring joy in seeing others enriched in life, but it means a personal enrichment of all those who share in the work. Such an effort has its definite spiritual rewards. It brings into the experience new meanings and new values. First, it means an enrichment through the multiplication of influence. Such an accomplishment assures one that he does not live unto himself. The one led to Christ becomes, in a most real sense, a part of the life of him who has led him to the Saviour. Such an experience has profound influence upon the spiritual life. Second, it means enrichment because there comes a new sense of worth. Many Christians are intimidated by what modern psychologists call "an inferiority complex." They seem to feel they must be good but cannot be really good for anything. No one who has truly become an evangelist can doubt the worthwhileness of Christian living. Third, such an experience brings new satisfactions into life itself. It enriches spiritually. It leads to a new sense of relationship with God, to a new appreciation of the power of religion, and to a new purpose to live a self-sacrificing life. The deepest depths of redeeming grace come into the experience only when one shares that experience with others. People who are actively engaged in the effort to win others for Christ grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ. Such people are not driven about with every wind of doctrine and are not following every new theory of religion. They become grounded in the truth, fixed in purpose and thoroughly furnished for every good work. It is true that some people in the name of religion and evangelism become spiritual gad-abouts, but these are usually those whose evangelism is largely a new thrill and not a faithful witness for Christ. Such evangelism is causing much confusion and is leading many honest hearts astray. But when people become so deeply in earnest about the things of the Spirit that they gladly and purposefully share with others their new found joy, they become rooted and grounded in love and express a new loyalty to Christ. The people who run hither and thither in the name of evangelism always following the latest fad and seeking out the newest excitement, are not displaying the mind of Christ and are not growing in the things of the Spirit. But the people who earnestly give themselves in loyalty to the Church to win others, are the strong virile Christian characters in the kingdom. The privilege of sharing in this great privilege sets forth the challenge of evangelism.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

While there is a great privilege there is also a great responsibility. To be entrusted with the Gospel truth is a stewardship. God purposes to save the world through saved men and women and he counts on every one who has come into the experience of the saving grace to go and tell others, bringing them into this experience also. If we fail, God fails in this greatest work. It is true that in the final outcome we believe God will win. We cannot bear the thought that God in infinite wisdom should have founded the work of redemption in such a way that ultimate triumph is impossible. But too often people hide behind such an optimistic world conception. Unless man helps God, God will fail to find entrance into the hearts and lives of those now living and within reach of His Church. These lives will miss the joy of salvation and the redeeming grace of God. They will miss the greatest good in life and be ushered into eternity unprepared to meet God. To the believers there has been given the responsibility to bring the truth of God to them. They dare not evade this responsibility. To know the way means that God will hold man responsible for pointing this out to others. As Christians we are our brother's keeper. To us there has been entrusted the ministry of reconciliation. As before indicated, this responsibility rests upon all. Some may take a more leading part in the work, but all have a share. No one can say that he is not included. Excuses will not avail. God does not ask man to do what he cannot do, but he does hold him responsible for what he can do. All can witness for him. All can extend the invitation. All can vindicate the Christian principle through Christian living and thus bring an added urgency upon those who are still away from God. No one can deceive himself but rather listen to Jesus when he says, "Ye are my friends if ye do the things which I command you."[18] There is danger that people will fail in their own lives because they are trying to lay hold upon the blessings of salvation in a selfish spirit, for such a spirit makes impossible the joy of salvation. To be a Christian is not merely a life of enjoyment, but also a life of sacrificial self-giving. It is not an easy way to live a Christian life, but a glorious and satisfying way. One weakness in the Church is that too many people are trying to take it so easy living the Christian life. The warning of the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews is a message to which all should give earnest heed, "Let us fear therefore, lest haply, a promise being left of entering into his rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it."[19]

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[18] John 15:14.

There is another truth which greatly enforces this sense of responsibility. Those who are today the recipients of this saving truth have been brought into these blessings through the faithfulness of others. They are the beneficiaries of those who gave themselves in loving obedience to Christ that others might be saved. Some of these carried on their work under great hardships and with added sacrifices, but they were true to Christ and the Church, and the believers are the recipients of their love and loyalty. Shall Christians today be less loyal than those who went before them? They are today furnished many privileges which the past generations never dreamt of. As before indicated all these are directly and indirectly the result of the operation of the Gospel in the lives and relationships of men. It is not difficult to point out some failures in the past, but are people justified in relaxing their effort because others did not do all that they should have done? There are many new implications of the work of evangelism which are clearly brought to light in recent experiences, but these only reinforce the fundamental truth that people need to be brought to Christ and their lives and relationships brought under his Lordship. It would indeed be folly to criticise the work of the past and then sit idly by and neglect the duty toward the present. The larger knowledge which has come, only reinforces the responsibility which is resting upon the Church. The past must answer for its response to the truth of God. It sometimes seems as if many people thought the past were primarily responsible to them. Not to man but to God must the answer be made. But all must give an account of their stewardship to God. To those who are given larger opportunities of such will be expected a larger service. Jesus said, "To whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required."[20] There is great need that the sense of responsibility be requickened in the Church.

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[19] Heb. 4: 17.

THE NEED OF ADEQUATE PREPARATION

The challenge of evangelism carries with it an urge for definite preparation for this greatest of all services. There may be an element of truth in the oft repeated excuse of some Christians saying they cannot do this work. That may describe their condition but does not justify their excuse. It may be true that people are lacking in fitness but such fitness can be secured and people are responsible for this as well as for the service they render. It would be unreasonable for anyone to rush into such a service unprepared, but equally foolish and sinful to refuse such preparation through which fitness may be secured. Several elements in such preparation should be carefully noted. (1) There must be fitness through personal experience. A person who has never experienced the saving grace in his own heart cannot lead others into the experience of salvation. Jesus said, "Can the blind guide the blind? shall they not both fall into the pit?"[21] The apostle Paul had the same truth in mind when he said, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him: and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged.''[22] Such spiritual mindedness comes only through an experience of salvation. (2) There must be fitness through Christlikeness in character and life. The more nearly a person approximates the pattern of Christ, the more truly will his influence and life convince and win others. Of Peter and John it was said that the people "took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus.''[23] Christlikeness in character and life is the most powerful argument in evangelism. (3) There must be a clean and consistent life. This is implied in what has just been said, but has another aspect. John was right when he said "If our heart condemn us not, we have boldness toward God; and whatsoever we ask we receive of him because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing in his sight.''[24] Unless there is a clean life there will be condemnation, and where there is condemnation there is lack of courage. (4) There must be victorious living. Unless a person is living the victorious life he has no persuasive message to bring to others. The word of promise is "He that overcometh, and he that keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give authority over the nations.''[25] (5) There must be the spirit of sacrificial selfgiving. The Apostle Paul said, "I am become all things to all men that I may by all means save some.''[26] Jesus said, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.''[27] (6) There must be a life filled with love. The moving power must ever be love. It is love which gives the finest qualification. Many a person otherwise limited in preparation but with a heart filled with love is showing great efficiency in evangelism. The Apostle Paul touched a great truth when he said, "The love of Christ constraineth us."[28] (7) There must be knowledge of the Word of God. The admonition of the Apostle Paul is still applicable, "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth."[29] To be efficient in the great work of evangelism one must be trained in the Word of God. (8) There must be a purposeful and unyielding aggressiveness in endeavor. This is not merely a work of one contact but often of many contacts. It is not something one can do and then forget about it. It is rather an attitude of continuous solicitude. (9) There must be earnest prayer. Unless people pray they fail to win. Prayer prepares the worker and also the one to be won. (10) There must be complete submission to the leadership of the Holy Spirit. He is the great leader in evangelism and without his aid there is no success. (11) There must be a passion for souls. A passion which is a burning desire of the heart born out of a true valuation of life. No one can witness effectively unless his testimony is that of the burning heart. Such fitness can be had by all who are willing to pay the price. The challenge of evangelism calls for a prepared life.

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[20] Luke 12:48.

[21] Luke 6:39.

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[22] I Cor. 2:14.
[23] Acts 4:13.
[24] I John 3:21 22.
[25] Rev. 2:26.
[26] I Cor. 9:22.
[27] Matt. 16:24.

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[28] II Cor. 5: 14.
[29] II Tim. 2: 15.

CHAPTER X

THE DYNAMIC OF EVANGELISM

THE PLACE OF SPIRIT IN RELIGION

THE dynamic of evangelism lies not in method but in Spirit. Religion is a spiritual reality which generates spiritual power, employs spiritual means, and achieves spiritual ends. Its deepest significance is found in the spiritual life which it generates. The instrumental cause of the spiritual life is the Spirit. The release and utilization of the Spirit in religion is the most important work in which those who are interested in vital religion can engage. This is not only true in the Christian religion but in all religions. In the words of W. R. Matthews, "Belief in the Spirit, then, is not only an integral part of Christianity but in some form or other is a common phenomenon of religion."[1] This is however peculiarly stressed in the Christian religion, because Christianity is pre-eminently a spiritual religion. Jesus, the founder of the Christian religion, said "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth."[2] Sometimes an attempt is made to classify religions as "religions of authority and religions of the Spirit." For closer analysis and more detailed study such a classification is helpful, but so to classify religion is a fundamental misconception, for when religion ceases to be a spiritual reality it ceases to be religion and passes over into the realm of social theory or philosophy of religion. Religion is fundamentally a spiritual reality and the essential element is the

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[1] Christian Century, March 1, 1923.
[2] John 4:24.

Spirit. The measure and character of the Spirit released by religion determines the redemptive significance and power of a religion. The utilization of the Spirit in religion is, therefore, of first importance.

In the Christian religion, the Holy Spirit is the instrumental cause of the spiritual life. The utilization of the Holy Spirit is the secret of life and power in the establishment and spread of the Christian religion. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit is closely related to that of the doctrine of the Trinity, both of which are distinctly Christian conceptions. There are problems and difficulties in both of these doctrines. The doctrine of the Trinity involves the metaphysics of God, and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit involves the mystery of personality. In both of these realms there is yet much which is unknown. It should not, therefore, unduly disturb one to find that there are difficulties and problems in these Christian convictions. It should, however, be carefully noted that both of these doctrines belong specifically to the realm of salvation. Certain aspects of these doctrines are found in other realms of thought and experience, but in these they always hold a secondary place, while in the realm of salvation they occupy a place of first importance. The deepest significance of this conception of God is found in the fulness and manifoldness of the life in God as revealed in his redemptive activity. The fuller knowledge of the vastness and marvelousness of the universe as disclosed through modern science has greatly enlarged the thought of God. There are those who believe that this has brought to man the greatest thought of God. There is much truth in this contention. Surely "the Heavens declare the glory of God,"[3] in a new and most compelling way through this increased knowledge. The God who creates and directs such a world as is now disclosed to man must be a great God. His wisdom and power are so great that man stands in awe and wonderment. The belief in the omnipotence of God has taken on added meaning through these revelations. No one who has any appreciation of what this knowledge really means will doubt that this disclosure has magnified God. Yet there is danger that this great disclosure sets God too far away from man, even though the thought of the immanence of God is more stressed than formerly. The fact of the greatness of God alone does not make him winsome. In fact it may make him so incomprehensible, so far removed from man, that fellowship with him seems most difficult, if not impossible. As before indicated, there seems to be a rather general feeling of aloofness from God in many lives which causes confusion in thought and religious impoverishment in experience. In the light of such a disclosure as modern science has brought to man, there is danger that the personal element be pressed so fully into the background that man fails to find a sure basis for fellowship with God. Whatever the value of this larger conception of the universe, and it has great value, it still remains true that the greatest and most satisfying conception of God comes through the disclosure of the fulness and manifoldness of the life in God as expressed in his redemptive activity. That which makes God so attractive, so winsome, so satisfying to the human soul, is not his greatness in terms of his creative activity, but his greatness in terms of love and redeeming grace. His redemptive love and grace find expression in such manifold ways of operation in the work of redemption that man is instinctively led to think of the fulness and manifoldness of life in God. While these conceptions involve problems, it should not be overlooked that every conception of God involves problems. The conception gathered from modern scientific discoveries has its problems. There has been an effort to simplify the conception of God by denying all distinctions in God, yet the conception of God as a purely unitary being is wholly unsatisfactory and fails to make God meaningful in terms of redemption. Man is instinctively driven to seek for the fulness and manifoldness of life in God.

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[3] Psalms 19:1.

It is true that this conception of fulness and manifoldness of life in God cannot be scientifically established, yet its basis in fact is not, therefore, necessarily shaken. It is not unreasonable to think that God is greater than man's greatest thought of him and that his fulness and manifoldness exceed all his manifestations. To hold a conception of God which cannot be fully demonstrated, may be beyond reason, but not necessarily contrary to reason. There are reaches of faith as well as deductions of reason. Faith has its right of assertion as well as has the reason. These doctrines involving the fulness and manifoldness of life in God for human redemption are essentially doctrines which appeal to the heart, and belong primarily to the realm of faith. It should of course ever be remembered that all such conceptions must be held in their proper relationship to those truths concerning God which have become so firmly established in Christian consciousness that they cannot be shaken. There are convictions which have become so fixed in Christian thinking that all other truths must be placed into proper relationship to them. One of these truths is that of the Oneness of God. There is but one God, not three Gods. Any conception of either the Trinity or the Holy Spirit which sets aside this fundamental truth is to be rejected. There is always a tendency on the part of some people to press these conceptions to such unwarranted conclusions that they are carried over into the thought tritheism, but Christianity rejects such a theory, holding as a central doctrine the belief that there is but one God. Another truth which has come to be firmly established in Christian thinking is that of the Unity in God. God is not divided. He is not in part present in the Father, in part present in the Son and in part present in the Holy Spirit. Any one at all familiar with the Scriptures knows full well that this thought is wholly rejected by the full ascription of Deity to the Father, and to the Son, to the Holy Spirit. Wherever God is present, whether as Father, Son or Spirit, he is present in the totality of his being and the fulness of his power and life. Another truth which is firmly grounded in Christian consciousness is the belief in the Harmony in God. There is no discord in Him. Father, Son and Spirit are in full agreement of thought and life. God, in the totality of the fulness and manifoldness of the life in Him is operative in one eternal accord and purpose, seeking to effect human redemption. There is no hesitancy in God to have man brought into fellowship with himself. In fact, he is supremely concerned and with sacrificial mindedness is seeking to bring this about.

The Christian conviction, however, implies that in this unity there is a Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This has its reality in the fulness and manifoldness of life in God as the dependable object of religious dependence. The mystery involved in this belief may ever elude man in his thinking, but the power of this truth becomes a satisfying experience in terms of redemption. There is great spiritual worth in this Christian conception. It may, of course, be asked, Why should the Church continue to hold such a difficult doctrine? Why should not the conception of God be simplified? Why should one try and retain a belief which seems more and more involved in the light of modern world-conceptions? In the light of modern science can these conceptions be made meaningful in the thinking of people? These are questions which are frequently raised and should not lightly be set aside. There are many people for whom these conceptions are difficult and confusing. One must ever be willing to adjust himself to the enlarging truth and welcome the greater revelation. No life can afford to fight against the truth. But in the effort to make such adjustments great care should be exercised lest what seems to be a new truth, and is proclaimed as such, is, after all, a misreading of facts. All truth stands in vital relationship with the truth already discovered. This applies to the conception of God. While man should ever search after a fuller knowledge of God, there are some things which are so fully established that any new truth which is set forth as contradicting these things should be most carefully studied. It may well be asked, Is there any other conception of God which carries as great or greater spiritual power than that which implies the fulness and manifoldness of the life in God? These Christian conceptions which the church has down through the centuries given to the world have made the Christian faith a spiritualizing power and Christianity a spiritual religion. They have lifted Christianity above other religions and have firmly grounded the Christian faith in a spiritual order. It is not primarily a question of simplification of belief, but of furnishing the human heart with an answer to its outcry and a supply for its need. It has before been pointed out that the heart has its rights as well as the reason. These conceptions have been retained in the Christian faith not merely because they were long ago written into the Christian confessions but because they somehow satisfy the deepest religious needs of the soul. They are the conclusions of faith based upon the Word of God, confirmed in the life of Jesus and Christian experience and meet the demands of man's life in terms of the outreaches of the soul after religious satisfaction. The heart clings to these because they bring spiritual satisfaction.

But is there no proof? We must let the history of Christianity give answer. During these nineteen hundred years of Christian thought and life many attempts have been made to modify this conception of the fulness and manifoldness of life in God, but these efforts have always resulted in a weakened Christianity which failed to mediate spiritual life and power. No other conception has as yet been set forth which equals this in spiritual influence, power and satisfaction. On the other hand, in every great religious crisis, when men became really in earnest about spiritual things and laid hold upon the fulness and manifoldness of the life in God, praying to the Father, in the name of Jesus and through the power of the Holy Spirit there was released a new spiritual force which resulted in transformed lives and changed social conditions. It is interesting that at the present time, when all over the world there is an urgency for a new order the Church is again turning to lay hold upon the fulness and manifoldness of life in God through the reutilization of the Holy Spirit. Already there are evidences of increased vitality and spiritual-mindedness in the church. The verification of this conception is not found in argument, or logical conclusions, but in spiritually reinforced lives and in spiritual power released in the community for the building of the Kingdom of God. This conception emphasizes the spiritual aspect of the Christian religion and has been set forth to safeguard religion against that spiritual impoverishment which destroys its satisfying worth and power. While the intellect has its place and reason makes its demands, yet faith rises above both and lays hold upon the saving power of God for human redemption. One of the great needs of the present time in evangelism is a rediscovery and use of this fulness and manifoldness of life in God for salvation. A great conception of God is needed to release great spiritual power. No other conception has as yet been found which has such spiritualizing power as this belief in the fulness and manifoldness of life in God for human redemption, therefore, the church does well not to remove the landmarks of spiritual life and power.

UTILIZING THE SPIRIT

The utilization of the Holy Spirit in the Christian religion is in a very peculiar sense the utilization of God in the fulness and manifoldness of his life for redemption, for the Holy Spirit is the instrumental cause of spiritual religion. It is the mission of the Holy Spirit to search out the deep things of God and make a disclosure of spiritual things to man. It is also his mission to search out the deep things in man and disclose spiritual need and direct the life to the source of spiritual life. Through his operation in the human soul spiritual life is quickened and the life brought into adjustment to the spiritual order. When he is neglected, rejected or disobeyed life in the spirit is made impossible.

The early church made much of the Holy Spirit and that church was an evangelistic force. All down through the history of the church whenever the church gave to the Holy Spirit his rightful place in thought and life, she was a spiritual church. Often there is much discussion about the reception of the Holy Spirit. Some people argue that the Holy Spirit is received in conversion, others that he is not received until later. There is also much discussion about the blessing, the fulness and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Much of this argumentation is often meaningless and causes more discussion than spiritual power. If the Holy Spirit is the instrumental cause of spiritual religion then he is active in the regeneration of the life, in the spiritual development of the life. in the sanctification of the life, in the empowering of the life, in fact, he is active in the whole process of human redemption. To confine his work to one experience is dishonoring him and limiting him in the work of redemption. The important thing is that man use the Spirit and permit the Spirit to use him. It is not enough to yield to him at some time, and claim his help in some experience, he must be used constantly as the great helper in the development of the spiritual life.

The Holy Spirit is in the world as the organizing and beautifying activity of God; he is in man as the upholder of the moral life and the instrumental cause of spiritual religion, and he has been specifically sent forth to carry on the work of Christ in human hearts and relationships. The question is not therefore primarily one of his coming, but of his place in the thought and life of the believer. Many hearts today would be much happier and spiritually more efficient if they would receive the Holy Spirit and use him in their lives. The tragedy is too many people heed him not, they have him not in their plans, and they use him not. When man earnestly seeks to utilize the Holy Spirit the marvelous thing which happens is that the Holy Spirit uses man in a new way for spiritual achievement. Using the Holy Spirit means therefore being used of him. In his teaching Jesus set forth three things which the Holy Spirit does for man.

THE REVEALER OF JESUS

The Holy Spirit is the revealer of Jesus. Consciously approaching the time of his departure, Jesus called special attention to the coming and work of the Holy Spirit. To his disciples he said, "Behold I send forth the promise of the Father upon you,"[4] and again, "I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of truth."[5] This Comforter whom he promised to send is the Holy Spirit who will continue the work of redemption made possible through Jesus Christ. Jesus also affirmed the Father's willingness to send the Holy Spirit saying, "If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him."[6] To the little group assembled on the evening of the day of his resurrection he said as he breathed upon them,

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[4] Luke 24:49.
[5] John 14:16.
[6] Luke 11:13.

"Receive ye the Holy Spirit."[7] It is very evident that Jesus definitely related the work of the Holy Spirit to his own saving ministry. He did not discuss the place and work of the Holy Spirit in the moral order of the universe, but he did emphasize the work of the Spirit in human redemption.

Jesus pointed out the need of the Spirit in the lives of men, when to his disciples he said that it was expedient for them that he go away for if he did not go away the Holy Spirit would not come unto them. He also pointed out that while the disciples thought they would lose Jesus when he went away, through the coming of the Spirit they would truly find him. While Jesus was in the flesh his glory was veiled and the spiritual import of his life was but little understood. While in the flesh his followers always tried to identify him with some temporal system and earthly program. Many seemed to find his spiritual claims difficult to understand and in many things hard to accept. He had to depart before his true character and mission could be understood. It is the work of the Spirit to make a disclosure of the spiritual character and mission of Jesus. Therefore Jesus said it was good that he go away. While in his physical presence they seemed to be blinded to the true character of his person and work, through the Spirit they were led to a fuller understanding of the meaning and purpose of his incarnation and life.

The Holy Spirit recalls and interprets the words of Jesus. Of this activity Jesus said, "He will bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you."[8] and again he said, "He shall guide you into all truth."[9] Once more he added, "He shall glorify me: for he shall take of mine and declare it unto you."[10] One of the surprising things about Jesus' public ministry was his attitude toward his own teaching. While he was keenly conscious of the fact that he was speaking the word of the Father and bringing to men the truth of God, so that he boldly declared that the attitude which men take toward his teaching would determine the character of their lives and their spiritual well-being, yet he never made any effort to put his teachings into such permanent form that they might be preserved. He seemed to be wholly indifferent about the preservation of his teachings in those common forms which most teachers usually employ. Only once he is said to have written and that time he used such a method that the first gust of wind could wholly obliterate his message. As far as our information goes he never asked anyone to write down what he said. He was seemingly indifferent about the record. Most great teachers are usually very careful that their messages are recorded exactly as they were given by the teacher, but Jesus seemed not to be interested in any such stereotyped form. There is only one explanation of this strange attitude taken by Jesus, and that is found in his implicit faith and confidence in the work of the Holy Spirit. He was willing to trust the record to the Holy Spirit. He said of his activity, "He will bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you."[11] The spiritual import of this attitude of Jesus can be quite clearly discerned. Had he written anything, the parchment upon which he wrote would long since have become a relic which men would worship and the spiritual significance of his words would be forgotten. If any of his written words were available today men would be quarreling more about the meaning of his words than seeking to find their spiritual power. Jesus well knew that the Holy Spirit was needed to bring forth the spiritual implication of his words. Nor is this ministry of the Spirit merely an activity through which the words of Jesus are recalled for a permanent record, but it is also that activity through which the ever enlarging meaning of the teachings of Jesus is disclosed for the gradual unfolding of Christian character. The Holy Spirit continues to recall and interpret the words of Jesus thus leading the believers into an ever enlarging spiritual life.

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[7] John 20: 22.
[8] John 14: 25.
[9] John 16: 13.

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[10] John 16:14.

[11] John 14:25.

In this fact there is a great truth suggested which should receive more attention. Much effort has been made to discover the exact words of Jesus. This is not always easy, in fact, it is a question whether it can ever be accomplished with satisfying accuracy. Some people become greatly disturbed when someone questions whether Jesus actually said a certain thing in the exact words in which the truth has been recorded. It is of course interesting and desirable to approach the exact words of Jesus as fully as possible, and all who are interested in Jesus are interested in this effort, yet this is not the work of greatest importance. Such a discovery is not the greatest achievement. One might find the exact word and yet miss the spirit thereof. Jesus said, the Holy Spirit would recall these words. This he did in helping those who were chosen as the organs of revelation to record the great revelation of God for mankind. Whether these were always in the exact words of Jesus is of lesser significance than their spiritual significance. This spiritual meaning the Holy Spirit set forth with clearness and accuracy as the foundation of belief. What these followers of Christ were led to record through the aid of the Spirit was that which Jesus wanted to have preserved as the abiding truth. The greatest authority in the teachings of Jesus lies not in the number of exact words discovered but in the record of the life and teaching of Jesus made by holy men through the aid of the Holy Spirit. It is not in the letter but in the spirit that the deepest truth is found. Jesus is not primarily concerned with the letter but with the spirit. Had he been concerned with the letter he would have written down what he said, but being interested in the spiritual meaning of his message, he entrusted the record to men who were guided by the Holy Spirit. Such a record we now have through the aid of the Holy Spirit.

During recent years the teachings of Jesus have been set forth in bold relief through New Testament study and investigation. Modern scholarship has not only given great help through various translations, but through much additional information concerning the times and customs of Jesus' day. It is possible today to enter more fully into the experiences of Jesus, because the age in which he lived and the major interests which moved men in his day are more fully known. The whole life of Jesus has been set into bold relief as never before. There is a richness of resource of material bearing on this subject which has great value in the study of the life and teachings of Jesus. This information is today also made available to most people. In the past only a few scholars could have access to much of this material but today it is within reach of most people. But what does this added knowledge bring forth? Sometimes it seems as if but little spiritual meaning and power were released through all this added information. People know more, they have access to many more sources, but there seems to be lacking spiritual appreciation and spiritual understanding. May it not be that this is due to the fact that there is too much neglect of the Holy Spirit as the interpreter of Christ? The Holy Spirit must be utilized to bring forth the spiritual import of this larger knowledge. Men know better what Jesus said, but they seem not to be greatly moved by this added knowledge. It is of course true that some scholars have greatly limited the teachings of Jesus through critical research, but even if one were limited to this lesser portion of the teachings of Jesus, it still remains that there are great meanings to be set forth, and great challenges to be accepted. The number of the teachings of Jesus are not as important as the spiritual challenge therein contained. The best way to come to an appreciation of what Jesus really taught is to begin to practice what he commands. It may be but a fragment of what he said, but those who really take Jesus seriously will soon discover the larger truth. The words of Jesus are according to his own statement "spirit and life"[12] and must be so received. There is great need that the spiritual meaning of the teachings of Jesus be more fully apprehended through the aid of the Spirit. Our age needs such a spiritual refurnishing.

DISCLOSING DEEPER TRUTHS

The Holy Spirit also brings forth those deeper truths which Jesus himself could not reveal while here in the flesh. Concerning these truths he said regarding the work of the Holy Spirit, "He shall teach you all things" [13] and again, I have yet many things to say unto you but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he the Spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things so ever he shall hear, these shall he speak; and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come."[14] From these statements it is plain that Jesus thought of the work of the Holy Spirit as a continuous disclosure of the truth which he came to bring to men. Through the Holy Spirit Jesus continues to speak to men and to make known those deeper truths of saving grace. These added disclosures deal not so much with the principles which underlie redemption, as with the outworkings of saving truth in the lives of individuals and in human society. Too often people seem to deny the Spirit this right of making such further revelations of truth, and thus oppose Christ in his effort to make his mind and spirit operative in the world. There has always been a hesitancy on the part of some to accept this truth. When the apostle Paul presented himself as a missionary there were those who sought to deny him this right because he was not commissioned by Jesus while he was yet on earth, but Paul grounded all his right, authority and commission in the fact that Jesus had spoken to him. Later in his missionary work when he found himself without any definite word of Jesus bearing upon some new situation or act of conduct he always sought through the Spirit to know the mind of Christ. All down through the centuries the church has been face to face with the need of added enlightenment, and whenever she has turned to the Spirit she has discovered the mind of Christ and was able to meet these new conditions with Christian purpose and power. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. He is given as the discloser of the deeper truth of Christ. Through him Christ continues to speak. Believers should use him more that they might come to a fuller understanding of the will of God.

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[12] John 6:63.
[13] John 14:26.

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[14] John 16: 12-13.

As society advances, the Holy Spirit brings all things under a new moral judgment. Thus it often happens that things which formerly were thought outside of the spiritual realm are brought fully into this realm and man finds himself compelled to take a new attitude toward them. He is called upon to make new moral valuations, new decisions and new life-adjustment in harmony with the greater truth disclosed. This is an illustration how the Holy Spirit discloses the mind of Christ. This he is ever seeking to do. It must grieve him that so often man seems unwilling to be led on in this way of discovery. This applies not only to society at large but to each life. In each life there are such new disclosures. This has particular meaning for the present age. As the larger realms of thought and life are entered there is an ever increasing urge for more of the mind and the spirit of Jesus. Through the Holy Spirit such a disclosure is possible. With the complex life of the present time and the multiplied relationships all so full of both promise and tragedy, man needs greatly such a ministry of the Spirit. There are some people who are fearful of such an added disclosure. They seem to want to measure everything by the disclosures made in the past, but such an attitude denies the Holy Spirit his rightful place in the unfolding social order. Unless the Spirit is accepted as the discloser of the deeper truths of redemption there can be no real progress in terms of moral and spiritual living. Men walk in the Gospel-way only if they follow the Spirit into the ever enlarging realms of truth and life. There are of course some who press this thought to unwarranted conclusions by making announcement of revelations which contradict the fundamental principles of the revelation made through Christ and cause great confusion in the Christian community. A little examination usually discloses the fact that such people received their revelations not through the Holy Spirit but through some spirit of selfwill and selfserving. The test of all these further disclosures is in the truth laid down as the basic facts of redemption and expressed in the life and teachings of Jesus. Any revelation which contradicts or makes inoperative the truth as set forth in Christ is not a disclosure of the Spirit of God but of the spirit of falsehood. It has already been pointed out that there is harmony in God. The Holy Spirit does not make revelations which contradict Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit discloses the mind of Christ, he reveals Christ. Usually these revelations heralded by those who claim a new way of life, are immediately exposed when tested by the mind of Christ. They bear the marks of the mind of another not Christ. This fact of relationship with Christ must be carefully noted. The church must guard against all perverting doctrines, but she must also be open to the disclosures made through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is waiting today to reveal the mind of Christ and to bring forth those deeper truths of spiritual reality which our age and generation so greatly need.

TRANSMUTING TRUTH INTO CHARACTER

The Holy Spirit also transmutes truths old and new into character. He not only reveals but applies the truth for a new birth and a cleansed and empowered life. The New Testament ascribes the work of regeneration, sanctification and redemption to the Holy Spirit. This is not a confusion of terms as is sometimes thought but rather a statement of fact. While Christ is the source of life, the Holy Spirit is the instrumental cause through whom this life is kindled in the soul. He takes the truth of Christ and transmutes it into character. This brings man to the marvelous richness and fulness in the life of God for human redemption. If the historical setting of redemption is recalled it will be seen that the Father is presented as the one who makes the great provision for human redemption; the Son as the one who actualizes the Father's will in terms of his own self-giving, and the Holy Spirit as the one who makes operative in the human heart and in human society this truth of redemption in terms of salvation. He transmutes this truth into experience. Not until salvation becomes an experience in the life of man does it become a reality in thought and purpose of man.

All this suggests that while there are epochs in the experience of salvation, it is fundamentally a process. It begins in regeneration, is nourished, strengthened and perfected through sanctification, but becomes ever more and more meaningful through a daily experience in the life of the believer. The saving work must continue daily through the aplication of the truth by the Holy Spirit. Too many people seem to look upon salvation as a kind of soul security which can be achieved through one experience as a sort of transaction and that after this little attention need to be given to this. This results in formal religion and fruitless living. The basic experience of the Christian life must ever be guarded for that marks the birth of the new life. But the life dare not camp there. The higher heights must be ascended. The daily saving power must be experienced. It is not enough to bear certain marks of the Christian life, the Christian must bear evidence of growth and increased spiritual mindedness. This is only possible if the Holy Spirit is given his rightful place in the life as the one who daily transmutes the truth of Christ into saving values. Man must lay hold upon him as the mediator of the experience of salvation.

RELEASING MORAL CONSCIOUSNESS

The Holy Spirit is also the one who releases a moral consciousness in man. It has already been pointed out that he is the upholder of the moral order in the universe, but he is preeminently the one who awakens and quickens the moral sense in man. This is implied in what has been said in the foregoing. As the discloser of Christ he challenges the moral sense. Christ is the great moral and spiritual reality whose presence ever wakens a moral sense. The more the Holy Spirit reveals Him the more there will be a sensitiveness to the moral demands.

Humanity needs such moral quickening. There have been many attempts to awaken a moral consciousness in man. Sometimes this has been tried through group sanctions; sometimes through the depicting of sin and evil; sometimes through an appeal to Divine authority, and sometimes through the setting forth of some moral theory or philosophy. All of these means have their place and contribute something toward this accomplishment, but there is one thing which does more than all others, and that is bringing man into relationship with Christ. If any man will take his stand by the side of Jesus Christ, the manly one, the sinless one, and the true one, he will soon discover his own moral lack and be brought under a new moral urge. Men may argue about sin as they will, but when through the Holy Spirit they are made to measure their lives by the life of Christ, they cry out instinctively with the publican, "God be thou merciful to me a sinner",[15] and with Peter "Depart from me for I am a sinful man".[16] The more the Holy Spirit is used to set forth Christ, the more will a sense of moral need come to men. There is no other way through which the moral sense can be more fully aroused in man than through this measurement of life with that of the true standard, Jesus Christ. The Church should use the Holy Spirit more in this great work.

But not only do men need to take their stand by the side of the perfect life of Christ, they need also to see Christ's attitude toward sin. He did not trifle with sin. To him it was more than an error, a backward pull, a remnant of animal passion. As Jesus saw it, sin was selfishness which as a selfwill, a self assertion, resulted in waste and death. Jesus always looked upon sin as a terrible reality in human life, a staggering, condemning, death-bearing reality in human experience against which he threw his whole life. For him sin was such a blight and curse of life that he was willing to give his life that it might be removed. How humiliated man must often stand in the presence of this revelation. How placidly he looks on as men go by in sin while Christ gave himself unto death that sin might be removed. How little sin stirs men and how enfeebled the sense of sin in the life. Men need to take their stand at the foot of the Cross once more and see sin as it really is and as Jesus saw it. They need to bring sinful men to this place where they can see what sin really is. Only when men really see what sin caused Jesus and with what self-giving he met it that its power might be broken, will their hearts really be aroused with a moral sense which will call forth moral action. But this is the task of the Holy Spirit. He can lead men to this truth. Too often he is shut out so completely that he cannot perform his work. He must be given his rightful opportunity in life to awaken a moral sense.

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[15] Luke 18:13.

[16] Luke 5:8.

Jesus stressed this thought when he said that the Holy Spirit would convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. He convicts of sin by bringing man into measurement with the standard which is Jesus Christ; he convicts of righteousness by a disclosure of Christ's attitude toward sin, and he convicts of judgment to come by bringing to man a sense of his own helplessness without Christ. In the light of this revelation man sees how utterly helpless he is to rid himself of his sin and escape its consequences without the saving power of Christ. All this is the result of the work of the Holy Spirit portraying man's need and setting forth the readiness and ability of Christ to help him in his need. History shows that this word of Jesus is verified in experience. Whenever the Church has used the Holy Spirit, there has been a requickening of the moral sense. Here, too, it may not be possible to furnish scientific proof, but there is abundant proof from experience. This truth has been verified again and again, and if anyone would have evidence let him lay hold upon the Holy Spirit for moral and spiritual power and the evidence will be forthcoming. A careful study of the present time reveals the fact that such a moral quickening is much needed. There has been such a revolt against what is called "puritanism" that there is an almost unlimited license claimed for anything in the name of self-expression. The present generation is a very congenial one, but largely devoid of a keen moral sense. In many lives moral distinctions are almost wholly obliterated. Many people pay little attention to the moral implications of their actions, some even refuse to come under moral restraints. There is great need of a requickening of the moral sense through the activity of the Holy Spirit. There is need not so much of a new moral code as a new moral life. This applies not alone to the life of the individual, but also to that of group relationships. Men need to be moved more mightily by the moral urge and demand. All this has its challenge to the Church for if she will utilize the Holy Spirit there will come such a moral refurnishing of life.

EMPOWERING FOR SERVICE

The Holy Spirit also leads and empowers for definite Christian service. He is very often designated as the Spirit of Power. The early Church associated the work of the Holy Spirit largely with that of empowering. They tested their confession by the power in their own lives. In more recent times this note of power has been too much neglected in the Church. Many people have largely conceived of the work of the Spirit as that of good feeling and the heightening of the emotional life. That the operation of the Holy Spirit has its emotional accompaniment is true, but when this is made the major fact there is always religious extravagance and lack of genuineness in character. There are those who press the work of the Holy Spirit to such extremes that they dishonor God. They expect to be thrown into emotional excitement in the name of religion which they would not approve under any other circumstances. They attribute to the Holy Spirit activity which they would most seriously denounce in the lives of their best friends. That sometimes people are overwhelmed by grief, by joy and by other happenings in life, is common knowledge; why then deny an overmastering sense through the presence and operation of the Holy Spirit? But such experiences are accompaniments and not the essential facts of the work of the Spirit. When these are made the major interest, God is dishonored and the work of true religion is hindered. There is great need of more of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers today, but there is also a great need of a more sane and spiritual understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit. Many good, honest, spiritually earnest people are being led astray by isms, cults and religious variants whose leaders claim a fuller measure of the Spirit. After the first flush of excitement dies out most of these people feel themselves misled and deceived and only too frequently embarrassed with the result that they are torn away from the Church and have no satisfying spiritual fellowship and help, and many lose their sense of relationship with God and drift away. The Church must assert herself and claim her right. The Holy Spirit is operative in the Church and people should not need to go to other movements in search of him. While the evils of such extreme expressions must be opposed, the need of reaffirming the Christian belief must also be stressed. Possibly the one reason why people are misled is because so little use is made of the Spirit in many churches. There are members in some churches today who must honestly say, "We did not so much as hear whether the Holy Spirit was given."[17] Almost everything else is preached, but the Holy Spirit is neglected. So long as this is the state of the Church spiritually hungry people will search elsewhere, even if they fail.

TWOFOLD EVIDENCE

The greatest evidence of the Holy Spirit in a life is a twofold one. First, it is found in Christlikeness in spirit. Paul was deeply conscious of this fact when he wrote, "If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his."[18] Too often people who have confessed to be under the influence and power of the Holy Spirit lacked such Christlikeness. It matters not what other elements may be made evident unless there is Christlikeness in Spirit the work is not of the Holy Spirit. Second, it is found in the consciousness of a power not otherwise possessed. The presence of the Spirit in a life is preeminently marked by the consciousness of power. This power is not primarily for extraordinary exploits, but for moral and spiritual living. It has not been infrequent that people who were highly emotionalized in some religious service through what they believed to be the empowering of the Holy Spirit, fell into very un-Christlike attitudes before they left the assembly. Such a limiting of the Spirit is untrue to the teaching of the Bible and unfruitful in Christian living. The most influential Christians are those in whose lives there is a power which helps them to live Christlike and sends them forth into new ways of useful living. There is possibly no urgence for a new visitation of the Holy Spirit which is forcing itself upon the Church today more than this need of Christlikeness in thought and life. If the yearning for the Spirit which is so general in the Church, is nothing more than a yearning for a new religious thrill, then it holds little promise of good. But if this is really a yearning after that power which will enable the believers to exemplify the mind and spirit of Jesus in the ever enlarging spheres of life and activity, then there is nothing more hopeful than this yearning after the Spirit. It is impossible to hold Christianity out of the larger relationships of life and save Christianity. Either it must have a saving influence in all of man's life or it cannot hold first place in his thought and life. Many good people feel this keenly today, but are also keenly conscious of their own impotency in the face of the larger demands made upon Christian living. Such empowering, however, is possible. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to lead and empower the believer for every good work. Through his activity Christians are made efficient for the larger task.

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[17] Acts 19:2.
[18] Rom. 8:9.

This task of living implies two elements. First, there is the example of Christlikeness. Through the Holy Spirit Christ is formed in the life in such a way that he is represented to men through the life. The sharpest criticism against the Church today is that of the indictment of Christian living. The charge too often made is that the followers of Christ have not the courage to be like him. There are areas in life in which Christ is a stranger. There are realms of conduct into which he is not invited. There are habits and activities which are more characterized by selfishness than by the mind of Christ. This is not always true because people are false or wilfull pretenders, but because they lack power to live out truly the life of Christian principle. They are weak where they should be strong. Such genuineness of example is possible only when the life is daily refurnished through the empowering of the Holy Spirit. Second, there is the witness for Christ. It takes power to witness for Christ. This power is furnished by the Holy Spirit. Mr. Moody once noted a sign over a store for rent, which read, "To let, with power or without power," and he said that this characterized Christian people. They are either with power or without power. Many seemingly are content to give themselves to their generation with a profession but without power. How sadly true this is if tested out in actual life. There are families who have lived next door to their neighbors for years and yet not won them to Christ. There are workers who have labored side by side with others for weeks and months and yet left no special urgency upon the non-Christian to turn them to Christ. There are friends who enjoy the intimacy of friendship and yet fail to make this a challenge through which to bring the life of the Spirit to others. There are many intimate contacts which seem to be devoid of spiritual meaning and power. Why should this be thus? Surely God does not want his people to be without power. He has provided for their empowering. He gives the Holy Spirit, but too many claim him not and failing to use him are continuing in weakness and defeat. For such witnessing the Church needs the empowering of the Holy Spirit.

COMING TO THE HOLY SPIRIT THROUGH JESUS

In approaching the work of the Holy Spirit one should come to Him through Jesus Christ. It is well once more to recall that there is unity and harmony in God, and that the whole process of redemption must ever be held in its proper relationship. Whenever this is not done there is discord and failure. In approaching the work of the Holy Spirit too often Christ has been neglected. The person and work of Jesus Christ must ever be the foundation upon which the doctrine of the Holy Spirit rests. Take away this foundation and there will be wildfire and religious confusion. There is a great truth for the present day in this fact. There is a renewed interest in Jesus. He is being studied more than ever before. He is placed more centrally in all of life. More hope is clustering about him in all the varied relationships of life. It is true that in some instances He is merely accepted as a great teacher and leader and rejected as Saviour. He is teacher and leader, but preeminently, Saviour. It is in this fact that the deepest significance of the Holy Spirit is found. He is not preeminently come to set forth social ideals and educational principles, but to make operative the saving grace in Christ in all of man‘s related life. He is come to lead men and women to Jesus as Saviour.

It is evident, therefore, that the work of the Holy Spirit roots itself in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. Without Jesus there would have been no Pentecost and no coming of the Holy Spirit. In the early Church it was those most fully brought under the challenge of Jesus who were most receptive for the truth of the Holy Spirit. Whenever Jesus was presented the Holy Spirit was disclosed. It was while the one hundred and twenty were seeking to know Jesus better that the Holy Spirit came upon them. It was while Peter was preaching in the house of Cornelius, relating the story of Jesus, that the Holy Spirit came upon that group. Of this experience the writer of Acts says, "The Holy Spirit fell upon all them that heard the word."[19] When after the release of Peter and John that little company prayed for a renewal of loyalty to Jesus, the Holy Spirit came upon them anew.[20] Wherever the apostle Paul went he presented Jesus Christ and his work was confirmed by the Holy Spirit. This has been true all down through the centuries. Every time people really try to take Jesus seriously they are led face to face with the fact and need of the Holy Spirit. It is significant that at the present time there is a renewed interest in the Holy Spirit following the period of renewed study of Jesus. This fact holds in it great promise of spiritual good. Jesus leads to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit cannot do his work unless Jesus is clearly set forth. Man must ever come to the Holy Spirit through Jesus. The more the Church exalts Jesus Christ, the more she prepares for the work of the Holy Spirit. Just as the early Church tarried with the great commission of Jesus until the overpowering came, so today the Church with her commission to go and make the mind and spirit of Jesus operative in all of man's relationships, needs to tarry for her empowering.

NEGLECT OF EMPHASIS

There has been a tendency to neglect this great truth. As before indicated, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit presents problems. These have in a measure become complicated in recent times through various modern philosophical conceptions. The whole doctrine of God has been challenged by certain modern cosmic disclosures. Some people have concluded that God cannot be personal and have tried to satisfy themselves with a God who is nothing more than a vague spiritual element in the cosmic process. Others have tried to retain the personal element, but deny all distinctions, making God a kind of helpless unitary being shut up within a process which alone expresses his purpose. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit has thus been thrust into the background. Many religious teachers have themselves been confused and rather than confuse others have ceased to speak about the Holy Spirit. In many pulpits there has been a painful silence on this theme. In many hearts there have been disturbing questions. The difficulties have tended to intimidate and silence the Church on this vital doctrine. The result has been a lack of the Spirit in religion and an impoverished spiritual life. The most disturbing consciousness in the lives of the best Christian people today is the sense of weakness, which characterizes so many Christians and churches. There is something lacking. This intimidation has not proven spiritually helpful. The failure to speak forth with courage and claim the promise of the Spirit has left the Church halting and impotent.

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[19] Acts 10:44.
[20] Acts 4:31.

These difficulties cannot be thoughtlessly cast aside by thoughtful people. A blind credulity is never a spiritual force. People must be true to their intellect as well as to their hearts. Religion is not an unreasonable experience. There are aspects of Christian experience which elude the highest reasoning, but they are in the line of the best reason. They are not contrary to reason. Man dare never follow blind impulses. Yet his fears have led his spirit into captivity and left the heart hungering and weak. No real satisfaction has come. There is a longing unsatisfied. In the attempt to find solutions men have sought to come to intellectual rest. This is always an urge of life. People are disturbed by problems, they seek a condition which brings intellectual rest. In this effort there has been an endeavor to rule out mystery and reduce life to calculations of law and order, limiting such law and order, however, to a very small fragment of the known universe. But mystery cannot be thus easily ruled out. Life is a mystery. If mystery is ruled out, life must be ruled out. Little is gained by seeking to negate great realities. The great doctrines of the Church are rooted in life—the spiritual life. The statement of fact varies from time to time, but the fact remains. The weakness of the Church is that she has yielded too much to negation and has not been seeking earnestly enough to restate great truths in terms of vital spiritual living. As before indicated, the reality of the Spirit is a demand of the heart. It is not first and foremost a matter of ridding doctrines of mysteries or difficulties, nor is it even primarily a matter of intellectual reconciliation and rest. It is primarily a matter of spiritual life and power. If the doctrine of the Holy Spirit leads to such life and power, this doctrine rests in fact and dare not ruthlessly be set aside. History proves that the presentation of the Holy Spirit has been a spiritualizing factor in the Christian religion. Whenever the Church has utilized the Holy Spirit she has been an agency of moral and spiritual power, whenever she has neglected the Spirit she was lacking in power.

This doctrine is a doctrine of the experience of salvation and belongs in the presentation of vital religion.

RECOGNIZED BY THOSE INTERESTED IN EVANGELISM

The need of the Holy Spirit has always been recognized by those most earnestly seeking to promote the work of evangelism. The word which came to the ancient prophet is still the word which comes to every one who seeks to bring the truth of saving grace to all men, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith Jehovah."[20] In the great endeavor of world evangelism which is today spreading out over the whole world, there is need of the Spirit. The comforting fact which comes to all who are conscious of this need is that of the willingness of God to give the Holy Spirit to all that ask for Him. He may be received. When Peter presented the work of the Spirit at Pentecost, he declared this to be a fulfillment of the promise of God, then added, "To you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him."[21] In presenting this promise Jesus set it forth in a very interesting manner when he said it was very natural for parents to give good gifts to their children. That is what one would expect of parents. Then he added, "Much more" will the Father give the Holy Spirit. A mother whose son was accused of a great sin refused to believe that the report was true. When the evidence came in and the accusation was fixed in fact, she sent her son a message saying that his mother still believed in him.

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[20] Zech. 4:6.
[21] Act 2:39.

During his trial the mother literally sacrificed all to aid a wayward son. Many hearts were deeply moved by the love of this mother. Yet she was just doing what mother-love would demand. Parents give good gifts to their children! What parent could withhold such gifts? But God gives "much more." He wants to give the best. The best is the Holy Spirit to assist, to guide, to empower, that the saving grace and power of Jesus Christ might be fully realized in a life of saving fellowship with God. God is interested in man's salvation. He not only planned it and in the person of Jesus Christ made it possible, but he gives the Holy Spirit to transmute the truth into experience and character. He wants to give the Holy Spirit. May everyone be willing to receive him.

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